

Marginals are focus in final days of campaign

Continued from page 1

Through the day he warned his own troops against complacency, saying in speech after speech that "it isn't over until it's over."

Mr Blair said the Tories did not deserve to be elected and New Labour certainly was new. "The Tories have changed for the worst we have changed for the better," he said. Mr Blair, speaking to an audience of 400 party supporters in the Bristol Council offices, said there were many differences between Labour and the Tories. "Here is another one the buck will stop with me."

Mr Major ordered scores of ministers out into the margins, as well as virtually all the official staff at Central Office. Paddy Ashdown's resources also were being concentrated on his target seats, with the Cowley Street headquarters in London being emptied, amid claims from Liberal Democrat strategists that the party was "close to a breakthrough."

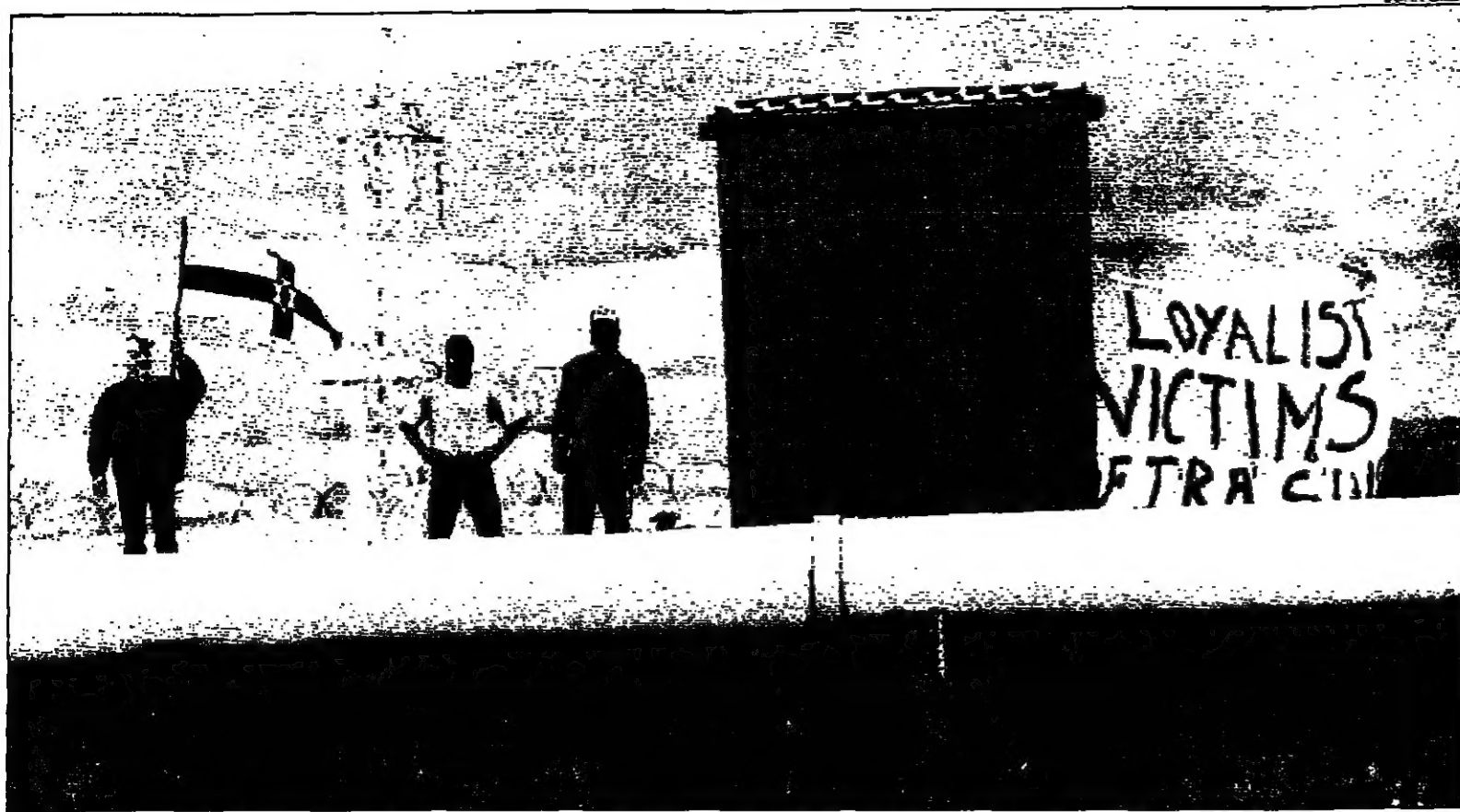
Mr Ashdown had a warning of his own about Labour: "If all that changes on Thursday is the nameplate on Number 10, it will be a disaster for this country."

Mr Major, meanwhile, delivered a stark message: "The country's future, our economy, our nation and the bright prospects for the future of Britain hang in the balance."

Mr Major concentrated heavily on the economic growth seen over the last 18 years, emphasising the curbing of inflation as the key achievement.

Earlier yesterday Michael Heseltine told voters that they were "sleepwalking into a nightmare" as he, too, stepped up the fight for the floating voter.

Mr Blair responded angrily to Mr Heseltine's claim. "How arrogant and insulting these Tories are," Mr Blair said. "The disaster is a Tory fifth term."



Prisoners display a loyalist flag on the prison roof. They are protesting about security restrictions imposed after an IRA escape attempt

Loyalists riot in Maze prison

By RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

LOYALIST prisoners went on the rampage at the Maze jail yesterday in protest at security restrictions imposed after an IRA escape attempt. They climbed the walls of H-blocks 1 and 2 after the prisoners emerged onto the roof.

Last night Billy Wright, a leading loyalist terrorist who was transferred to the Maze on Friday, said he would join the protest. Wright, from Portadown, Co Armagh, is serving eight years for threat-

ening to kill a woman. Republican prisoners have co-operated with the tough new security measures imposed as a result of an IRA attempt to tunnel out of the Maze last month. The loyalists oppose the tougher measures, including full searches, twice-daily head counts and random cell checks and say they are being penalised because of IRA activities.

The Prison Service punished the loyalists by denying family visits and suspending all temporary releases except in extreme compassionate cir-

cumstances. Relatives of loyalist prisoners protested at the punishment outside the prison gates and relatives of republican prisoners leaving the prison were abused.

John White, spokesman for the Ulster Democratic Party, which has close links with the outlawed Ulster Defence Association, said: "The prisoners are very, very angry. They see this as a form of collective punishment."

Mr White warned the government: "It is going to get very seriously out of hand if dialogue doesn't take place. It is not only an issue involving the prisoners, it has taken on greater proportions on the outside."

"There is a great deal of anger and frustration outside too and I am fearful it may get out of control altogether."

Alan Shannon, chief executive of the Northern Ireland Prison Service, said the day's events had not taken him by surprise. "I said it would be a bit of an uphill struggle because the prisoners had been telling us they were not at all happy with what we were proposing."

have adapted to counter the Home Office's advice to companies about bomb threats, and are careful not to leave any clues by using fake accents, going from telephone kiosk to telephone kiosk, and calling nursing homes, hospitals, and on two occasions private homes.

Yesterday the M1 was closed for seven miles for over three hours; a 20-mile section of the M5 was closed for three hours; sections of the M3 and M27 in Hampshire were shut; incoming flights to Southampton airport were halted; and Terminal Two at Heathrow and Gatwick's north and south terminals were all partially evacuated.

Police said that the number of bomb-warning calls where a device is actually planted has fallen during the campaign from one in two calls to one in seven. The IRA callers appear to

turning to smaller road systems, the AA said yesterday. The volume of traffic on the A-road network was growing daily, and there was evidence that drivers were postponing trips in the hope they would not face jams.

The Freight Transport Association said the six days of IRA disruption during the election campaign had cost the industry at least £30 million. The cost to smaller hauliers, private and company car drivers could be at least double that.

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BT trims national calls price by 10%

By ERIC REGULY

BRITISH Telecom yesterday reduced the prices of national calls by 10 per cent and eliminated the price difference between national and regional calls. The changes, which will save customers about £90 million a year, are expected to trigger price reductions among rival operators.

BT said the latest cuts raised the total customer savings to £409 million since last August. Under a price reduction formula imposed by OfTel, the telecommunications regulator, BT must increase the total savings to £417 million by the end of July. The price cutting will continue next year.

The company admitted that mounting competition was also behind the latest move. BT is losing more than 50,000 customers a month to the

cable-telephone companies, whose prices are generally 10 per cent to 20 per cent lower.

From May 29, the price of a national daytime call on BT's network will fall 10 per cent to 7.9p a minute, including VAT. The price of a regional call — non-local calls under 35 miles — will decline by 3.8 per cent to the same level. Prices for evening and weekend calls are unchanged.

Since September, when BT launched a series of reductions on all types of call, the cost of a five-minute national call has come down from 49p to 40p, a saving of 18 per cent.

The cable companies said their national call prices were still cheaper than BT's. Nonetheless, they are expected to drop their prices to maintain the differential.

BA plans to move from Paris airport

British Airways is planning to switch all of its Paris services away from Charles de Gaulle airport because of concerns over security. The company is concerned that Air Algérie, which has been a target for terrorists, has been allowed to open a check-in desk next to its own at the airport.

Yesterday BA checked in passengers at a nearby hotel rather than risk operating next to the Air Algérie desk. George Cooper, BA's European director, said this had caused "unacceptable" disruption for passengers. Last night the airline applied to the French civil aviation authority for approval to move its Paris services to Orly airport from May 1. Mr Cooper said: "The poor level of customer service we are currently offering at Charles de Gaulle is a direct result of our security concerns. I cannot allow it to continue. Our passengers and staff are fed up with the disruption."

The switch would affect up to 60 services a day and involve 6,000 passengers on flights from 13 British airports including Heathrow, Gatwick, Manchester, and Edinburgh. BA is particularly concerned that, unlike other French airports, Charles de Gaulle has not laid on any extra security for the resumption of Air Algérie flights.

Firefighters locked out

Striking firefighters were locked out of fire stations throughout Essex yesterday in a tough response by their employers which effectively prolonged the men's second 24-hour stoppage by 15 hours. The Fire Brigades Union warned of a growing risk of industrial action spreading nationally if Essex County Council carried out its threat of suspending firemen indefinitely. The all-day stoppage was timed to begin at 00.01 yesterday and end at the same time today. But, because watch patterns conflicted with the timing of the stoppage, the council refused to allow the men into stations for six hours before the start of the action and for nine hours after it officially ended. The council said temporary suspensions were imposed because firefighters were in breach of their contracts.

New Aids vaccine hope

An experimental Aids vaccine has successfully protected two chimpanzees against HIV infection, a team from the University of Pennsylvania has reported in *Nature Medicine*. The results raise hopes that a human vaccine based on the same principles and now in preliminary trials may prove successful. The virus was briefly detectable at low levels in the vaccinated chimps about six to eight weeks after infection, but then disappeared. This implies that the animals' immune system was able to fight off the disease. "We will have to wait to see whether this vaccine will become an HIV-1 vaccine," said team leader Dr David Weiner. "A great deal of additional work remains to be done before we can say that. But these results do give us confidence to go forward."

Car firms go by bike

Car manufacturers have given motorists some unexpected advice: cut pollution and congestion by leaving your car at home. Volvo has said that while there is still an important place for the car, "we all have to accept that there are times when it is not sensible to use a car. A third of journeys are shorter than a mile-and-a-half." It said that in the first mile of a journey a car emits 60 per cent more pollutants than when it has warmed up, and the petrol consumption is very heavy — the car does as few as six miles to the gallon. Next month Vauxhall is to begin a car-share scheme, and transport pool among almost 1,000 of its employees at its headquarters at Luton, Bedfordshire. The company said: "We are trying to make our environment here at Luton better for everyone."

Judge splits Sikh family

A teenage Sikh girl taught in the middle of her parents' separation was granted her wish to remain with her mother in Scotland instead of returning to a strict Punjabi way of life with her father and younger brothers in Canada. But Sudesh Singh, 35, mother of Gurwinder, 14, last night spoke of her horror that her son Jothan, 10, should be sent to Canada. "Jothan doesn't want to go. He made that quite plain." She vowed to appeal against the decision by Lord Macfadyen at the Court of Session. Avtar Singh and his wife and three children arrived in Scotland last August for a family funeral. Mr Singh then returned to Ontario with Ranjit, 3, but his wife refused to go and remained in Scotland with the other two children. He brought the custody action, citing the Hague Convention on child abduction.

Floor-birth mother sues

A baby suffered brain damage after being delivered on the floor hours after a hospital sent his mother home to her lodgings, the High Court in London was told yesterday. Francesca Brock-Hollinshead, 22, of Cranleigh, Surrey, is claiming damages from Bromley Health Authority. Her counsel told the court that staff at Farnborough Hospital in Orpington knew that the child was in breech position and that his delivery would be "high risk". But they failed to carry out a Caesarean on the day the baby was due and sent the mother home, telling her to return the next day to be induced. Ambulance staff resuscitated baby Oscar after 25 minutes, but were too late to prevent brain damage that means he will require constant care all his life. The authority denies negligence. The case continues.

Secrets and Lies is Bafta's outstanding British film

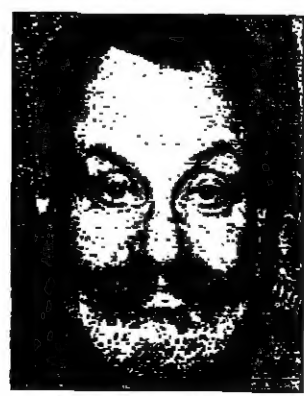
By ALEXANDRA FREAN
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

MIKE LEIGH'S moving and poignant comedy about family life, *Secrets and Lies*, took three honours at the British Academy Awards last night.

The English Patient, Anthony Minghella's £20 million epic wartime love story, also took three awards — including best film and best adapted screenplay for Minghella. The French actress Juliette Binoche repeated her Oscars success by taking the best supporting actress award.

But Mike Leigh's low-budget drama, which failed to capture a prize at last month's Oscars, took the Alexander Korda Award for the year's outstanding British film. Leigh won best original screenplay and Brenda Blethyn, best actress.

The Bafta best actor award went to Australia's Geoffrey Rush; star of the film *Shine*. The awards at the Royal Albert Hall in London were presented by Lenny Henry and attended by Bafta's patron, the Princess Royal. The



Leigh: film-maker wins honours in own country

jury honoured Britain's two most-viewed television programmes: ITV's *Coronation Street* took the Lew Grade Award for a significant popular programme; BBC's *EastEnders* was best drama series.

The BBC2 drama *Our Friends in the North* was best drama serial, and won best actress for Gina McKee. Its writer, Peter Flannery, won the Denis Potter award. Nigel Hawthorne was best television actor for *The Fragile Heart*. Oth

- David Lean award for direction. Joel Coen for the film *Fargo*.
- Best supporting actor (film). Paul Scofield (*The Crucible*).
- Best film not in English. *Ridicule*.
- Best short film. *Des Marjorettes dans L'Espace*.
- Best short animated film. *The Old Lady and The Pigeon*.
- Best factual series. *The House*.
- Best light entertainment programme. *Shooting Stars*.
- Best comedy. *Only Fools and Horses*.
- Hugh Wheldon award for best arts programme. *Leaving Home*.
- Best children's programme. *Shakespeare Shorts: Romeo and Juliet*.
- Flaherty documentary award. *Fernan's Last Theorem*.
- Best light entertainment performance. John Bird and John Fortune in *Rory Bremner, Who Else?*
- Best comedy performance. David Jason.
- Best news coverage. BBC *Newsnight's* BSE coverage.
- Best sports coverage. BBC's Euro 96 coverage.
- Best talk show. *Mrs Merton's Christmas Show*.
- Richard Dimbleby award for most important personal contribution (factual TV). Robert Hughes.
- Best foreign TV programme. *Murder One*.
- Fellowship: Woody Allen; Julie Christie.

Prince

Continued from page 1

tion, even vilification." He went on to suggest that this was because opponents of tradition felt threatened. "It is as if tradition represented the enemy of man's lofty ambition: the primitive force which acts as an unwelcome reminder ... of the ultimate folly of believing that the purpose and meaning of life ... lie in creating a material form of Utopia, a world in which technology becomes a virtual reality god, the arbiter of virtual reality ethics, and thus the eventual murderer of the soul of mankind."

Tradition, the Prince said, was not a man-made element but a "God-given awareness" of the natural rhythms of life and nature.

The clan's bright red, green and navy tartan has been rejected in favour of burgundy, green and navy, say by staff at McDonald's the burger chain. Workers' new uniform featuring waistcoats and scarves in Lindsay colours.

Last night High Chief Goudry Macdonald, the head of the Macdonald family, accused the burger giant of turning its back on its an-

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THE TIMES WEDNESDAY
DPP
By JON VICKERY
MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

A CORONER has ruled that a man who died of a heart attack while in the treatment of a mental illness was not a patient of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Coroner: Mr. Justice. Brendan: Mr. Justice. The man who died was a patient of the DPP. The DPP is a body which is responsible for the prosecution of crimes. The man who died was a patient of the DPP. The DPP is a body which is responsible for the prosecution of crimes.

Judge

Boy over

By KATHRYN KENNEDY

BOY GEORGE, the lead singer of the band Culture Club, has been found guilty of a high level of culpability in the death of a young girl. The judge said that the boy was responsible for the death of the girl. The judge said that the boy was responsible for the death of the girl.

Gay man lover in chicken

By JON VICKERY

A MAN who has been in a relationship with a gay man for many years has been found guilty of a high level of culpability in the death of a young girl. The judge said that the man was responsible for the death of the girl. The judge said that the man was responsible for the death of the girl.

Maddon over Big

THE historic Macdonald family has been found guilty of a high level of culpability in the death of a young girl. The judge said that the family was responsible for the death of the girl. The judge said that the family was responsible for the death of the girl.

DPP to investigate drug clinic death of IRA bomb survivor

By IAN MURRAY
MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

A CORONER is to refer the case of a man who survived the Aldwych bus bomb but died after private treatment for heroin addiction to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Paul Knapman, the Westminster Coroner, adjourned the inquest on Brendan Woolhead after two experts said he had died as a result of "grossly negligent" and "very dangerous" treatment at the Wellbeck Hospital in Marylebone, London.

Dr Knapman said the inquest

evidence had developed differently to what he had expected and it would be submitted to the DPP or Crown Prosecution Service to consider whether charges should be laid. "We are approaching the possibility of criminal matters," he said.

The inquest was told that Mr Woolhead, 34, suffered serious head and pelvic injuries when the bomb went off last February, killing the IRA terrorist who was carrying it. Mr Woolhead, a long-term drug addict, left hospital after two weeks and went to convalesce at home in Swords, Co Dublin.

Last October he went to the Wellbeck Hospital for an "ultra-rapid opiate detoxification treatment" to wean him off heroin. The addict is given a general anaesthetic over six hours so they are unconscious during the worst period of withdrawal symptoms.

Thirty hours after the detoxification began Mr Woolhead went into a convulsion and his heart stopped on October 3 last year. The detoxification treatment was developed in Vienna in 1988 and is widely used in Austria, Germany and Holland. The allegation of negligent treat-

ment came from an expert in addiction behaviour called by Mr Woolhead's family, Griffith Edwards, of the Maudsley Hospital, London, said the Wellbeck Hospital had made "manifestly false" claims about the treatment to Mr Woolhead. Professor Edwards criticised claims that the treatment was "unique in its efficiency" and that the patient would suffer no withdrawal symptoms.

In his opinion, Mr Woolhead signed a "consent document" that did not amount to informed permission, so the treatment was an

assault from a medical point of view. Claims that the treatment was "completely safe" were undoubtedly false, he said.

"My view is that this man died as a result of the grossly negligent treatment given by the Wellbeck Hospital," he said.

Robert Kerwin, another expert from the Maudsley, said he was certain Mr Woolhead died as a result of the "reckless" way the treatment had been administered. He said the recklessness included giving Mr Woolhead 15 different drugs and using an untested ther-

apy not subject to ethical restraints or safety guidelines.

In his opinion, the treatment was dangerous and unethical. "It's like driving a car over a narrow bridge at great speed, not knowing what is on the other side." The treatment involved an obvious and serious risk to the patient who should have been advised of this before it was carried out, the professor said. "In my opinion, this man certainly died as a result of the treatment he received."

Gary Gerson, consultant anaesthetist at the Wellbeck, said he had

not been told that Mr Woolhead had suffered severe head injuries recently. The inquest was told that Mr Woolhead had agreed with doctors that he could take a dose of heroin one last time before the treatment began. High levels of methadone, a heroin substitute, and morphine were found in his blood. Dr Gerson said he "didn't see it was possible" that Mr Woolhead had taken the doses inside the clinic.

Dr Knapman adjourned the case. The same jury will reconvene if there is no prosecution.

Judge says singer did have passionate and turbulent relationship with musician

Boy George wins action over homosexual affair

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

BOY GEORGE did have a homosexual affair with the rock musician Kirk Brandon, a High Court judge ruled yesterday.

Mr Justice Douglas Brown said there was overwhelming evidence that the two men had enjoyed "a brief, passionate and turbulent physical homosexual affair" in the early 1980s. The eyes of the 35-year-old Culture Club lead singer filled with tears as the judge said he was an "impressive" witness.

Mr Brandon, 40, already bankrupt and unable to pay any part of the estimated £200,000 costs of his failed "malicious falsehood" action, remained unbowed.

He swore later to renew his claim that Boy George lied when he wrote of a "one hundred nights of love" homosexual relationship in his autobiography, *Take It Like A Man*, and expressed his feelings about the end of an affair in a song, *Unfinished Business*.

The judge told Mr Brandon that he was a decent and talented man but that he had not been truthful about his phys-



Kirk Brandon with his wife and daughter yesterday

ical relationship with George (real name George O' Dowd).

Mr Brandon, who has a Danish wife, Christina, and a daughter, Siff, argued his case without lawyers. He had claimed that Boy George's tale of gay love was fabricated and born out of a thwarted obsession. The allegations, he said, had wrecked his career.

The former Culture Club front man had told the court that he had met Mr Brandon in a London pub and after a few weeks began a sexual rela-

tionship when Mr Brandon asked if he could stay over after a night out. Mr Justice Brown said: "Mr Brandon said he knew Mr O'Dowd was a homosexual who was sexually interested in him and yet went straight into his bed without protest and without asking if there was alternative accommodation either in another bed or settee or floor."

The judge added that it was extremely difficult to believe Mr Brandon's claim that Boy George had never made a pass

at him during the next few months in which they had shared a bed several times.

The judge said it was not suggested in Boy George's book that after 1981 Mr Brandon, who went on to achieve musical success with the bands Theatre of Hate and Spear of Destiny, had behaved in anything other than a heterosexual way. While Mr O'Dowd had admitted that he had told lies in the past about his heroin addiction, he was an "impressive witness" whose evidence he accepted.

"Mr O'Dowd was clearly not malicious in stating that which he knew to be true... The allegations of malice are quite hopeless and should never have been brought."

Outside court, as he hugged his wife and daughter, Mr Brandon said: "I will fight to clear my name in whatever court or country I see fit, England or the US," he said.

Surrounded by friends and supporters, Boy George said the court case had been "ridiculous". "Yesterday I said I loved him. I don't feel anything for him today. I certainly don't hate him... He knew he was lying, knew everything he said was untrue. He has caused himself a lot of hurt."



Boy George, an "impressive" witness, emerging victorious from the High Court

Mormon bishop in sex cases is cleared

By RUSSELL JENKINS

A MORMON bishop was yesterday cleared of 19 charges of sexually molesting women members of his congregation, but faces the possibility of another trial.

Peter Gibson, 72, showed no emotion as the jury delivered its verdicts at the end of a two-week trial at Liverpool Crown Court. He had denied allegations by six members of his congregation at Mill Bank Chapel, in the Stoneycroft area of Liverpool, and another young girl, spanning two decades.

They said that the bishop — the equivalent of a priest in the Church of England — took every opportunity to touch women sexually. Mr Gibson denied the allegations in court and during police interviews, claiming he was the victim of a conspiracy of liars.

The jury of seven women and five men could not come to a verdict on six outstanding charges after more than ten hours' deliberation. They told Judge Donald Hart that there was no prospect of their reaching a verdict on the charges, which related to four of the women. The judge allowed Mr Gibson bail until May 16, when a decision will be taken on whether to proceed with those charges.

Gay man 'stabbed lover in row over chicken marinade'

By JOANNA BALE

A MAN was stabbed to death by his gay lover after criticising the amount of marinade needed for chicken as they prepared for a barbecue, the Old Bailey was told yesterday.

Steven Hawkes, who had lived with his partner Graham Hawkes for two years, stabbed him with a single blow in the chest, using a kitchen knife with an eight-inch blade, David Waters, for the prosecution, said.

They had earlier pledged their commitment to each other at the Brompton Oratory in west London. Mr Waters said: "It was not a formal ceremony, but they went there to commit themselves."

"Sometimes, ironically, people are very fond of each other and perhaps love each other, which gives rise to a single act which causes the death of the other, which gives rise to instant regret. This is one such case."

He said Steven Hawkes had "consistently maintained" the death was an accident. The two men had been rowing all day and when Graham Hawkes, 35, criticised his lover's culinary expertise it was the final straw, it was said.

Steven Hawkes, 36, who had changed his name to that of his partner after exchanging rings with him, told police: "I was preparing a chicken dish for a barbecue for the next day. Graham said that I was putting too much mari-

nade on the chicken. I said 'Don't be silly.'"

He claimed that he shrugged "like an Italian" and as he put his arms up in that gesture the knife entered his partner's body. Mr Waters said: "The accused told police: 'I didn't realise I had a knife in my hand. Graham then stepped back and there was lots of blood and he fell into the hallway. It was nothing. Nothing we said amounted to an argument.'"

A police investigation revealed that the pair had been rowing earlier in a local pub, had thrown their rings across the bar and stormed out separately, Mr Waters said.

Later a policeman who lived downstairs heard the men screaming at each other. This was followed by a loud crash and the victim saying: "Christ, you've done it now."

Mr Waters added that the track of the knife wound was downwards, which did not fit in with the defendant's story that he accidentally stabbed him when he moved his hand in the upwards movement of a shrug. The court was told that the knife penetrated a full eight inches to the hilt, through a rib bone and piercing the heart. The defendant had also claimed initially that his lover had accidentally fallen on the knife.

Mr Hawkes, of West Drayton, west London, denies murder on August 25 last year. The trial continues.

TV to show police tapes of abuse interviews

By JOANNA BALE

POLICE were criticised yesterday for giving a television company videotaped interviews with children in an alleged abuse case. Diverse Productions is making three documentaries for Channel 4 about child protection and problems in obtaining evidence.

The Death of Childhood is to be screened in May and June and re-examines the Cleveland child sex abuse scandal. It asks whether children are protected any better ten years on.

Channel 4 said that it will not include tapes that might be used in court. "We show a few seconds of the warm-up part of the interview, to give an idea of how a child is questioned," a spokesman said. Northumbria Police said: "We have released some film of interviews with youngsters but only after receiving the express permission of the parents or guardians in each case. None of the youngsters could possibly be identified from the material we released."

Tony Flynn, the leader of Newcastle upon Tyne City Council, expressed concern over police providing tape extracts from an investigation into alleged abuse at one of the authority's nurseries. The case against two nursery nurses collapsed in 1994 after the judge refused to allow videotaped interviews with children as evidence.

Macdonald clan chief sees red over Big Mac's lowland tartan

By A STAFF REPORTER

THE historic Macdonald tartan has been surpassed by probably its most successful descendant.

The clan's bright red, green and navy tartan has been rejected in favour of the burgundy, green and navy of lowland rival the MacDonald's, the burger chain. Workers at its British outlets will wear a new uniform featuring waistcoats and scarves in the Lindsay colours.

Last night High Chief Lord Godfrey Macdonald, the head of the Macdonald family, accused the burger giant of turning its back on its ances-

tor's proud history. He said the fast-food retailer had no respect for the family name it promoted around the world. Lord Macdonald, of Sleat, Skye, said: "Whether or not McDonald's is actually run by a bona fide member of the Macdonald clan today is not important. What is important is that they are held to be one of the world's most famous promoters of the Macdonald clan through association. "Surely if they are going to dress their staff in tartan uniforms then they should dress them in the Macdonald tartan?"

However, he added: "In a

way I am quite glad they have distanced themselves from the Clan Macdonald's by not choosing our tartan. I pity the Lindsays."

Last night a spokesman for McDonald's said the food chain regretted if it had upset any members of the Macdonald clan. He said they had been considering a uniform change for their waitressing and counter staff for some time and had recently commissioned a Scots designer to brighten up tunics. He said the Lindsay tartan had been chosen because it was a more commercially pleasing shade than the Macdonald tartan.

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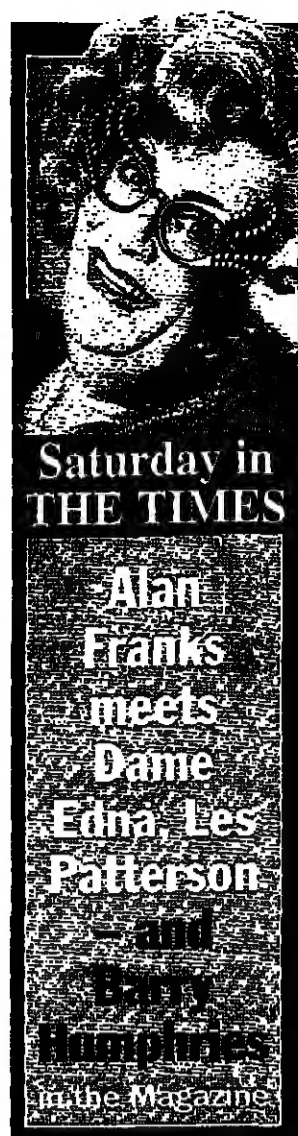
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Detective paid £60,000 for 'ugly' Rembrandt

By PAUL WILKINSON

AN UNDERCOVER police man was sold a stolen picture of a woman "so ugly that only her son would have painted it" without one of the vendors realising it was *Portrait of his Mother* by Rembrandt, a court was told yesterday.

The portrait, valued at £300,000, was completed in about 1629 and had been in the Earl of Pembroke's family for more than 300 years. It was stolen from the Great Ante Room in Wilton House, belonging to the Earl, in Salisbury, Wiltshire, on November 5, 1994, so that the noise of fireworks would drown the alarm.

The undercover officer, named only as James in court, paid £60,000 for the portrait. It was among valuable antiques and *objets d'art* recovered when police broke up a national trade in stolen treasures, Newcastle upon Tyne Crown Court was told.

The men who negotiated selling the stolen goods had little regard for the quality of the Rembrandt. They referred to it as "The Granny" and "The Old Lady", and one was



Mr Duddin and detail from the Rembrandt

heard to observe it was so ugly that only her son would have painted it.

The jury was told that all the pieces had been handled by David Duddin, 51, from Newcastle. Mr Duddin denies six counts of handling stolen goods, including three silver-gilt honey jars with spoons from Floors Castle, Kelso; and a walking stick made from the spear that killed Captain Cook, taken from a house in Coldstream.

William Lowe, QC, for the prosecution, said there was no suggestion that Mr Duddin

was involved in any of the thefts, but the prosecution would prove that he had handled the stolen pieces. Mr Duddin and others were arrested after a series of meetings early last year with the undercover police officer, who posed as an expert adviser to blackmarket contacts in the antiques world.

James agreed to buy stolen silver for £5,500, a quantity of swords for £4,500 and paintings for a further £5,000. Police then returned the property to its owners.

The undercover officer was

told £100,000 was wanted for the Rembrandt, but offered £60,000 plus a payment of £3,000 to Mr Duddin for his part. At a meeting in London he was allowed to inspect the work. A sale was agreed.

James, who gave evidence from behind a screen, said he was introduced to Mr Duddin by a man called Vincent, who was described as a financier of deals. They told Mr Duddin they were looking for antiques to sell on the American market. The officer said: "We were discussing a painting attributed to Rembrandt. I was aware that it was stolen. I said we would have to do some research and try to authenticate it before coming to some decision on price. Dave said he had been assured the painting was a Rembrandt and was worth a lot of money."

"He said the painting was now in London with someone else who had invested £75,000 in getting it that far. Dave said he had some other pieces we might be interested in. He asked if we would consider silver or paintings of English country scenes and sports. The trial continues."



The youngest Tordoff at the reunion, Laura, 4, with Maurice Tordoff, 72

Search for family tree brings world's branches together

By PAUL WILKINSON

WHEN Lord Tordoff's family grew tired of people asking if their surname was Russian, they decided to trace their roots. They did not bargain on an invitation to a family reunion in a village hall in west Yorkshire at which 300 people were present.

There was a Buddhist monk from Singapore, an American clown, a novelist and a documentary film maker from Devon, but not a single Russian. Which was not surprising, as Tordoff is an old Yorkshire name dating back to the late 16th century. It is possibly a corruption of the Viking name Thiodwulf, meaning lone wolf.

Lord Tordoff, the former Liberal Democrat Chief Whip and now chairman of the European Select Committee in the Lords, travelled from his home in Somerset with his sister, Barbara, for what was billed as Tordoff Day.

He said: "The turnout has been spectacular. We have just spent all day talking to people and finding out more about our family. We have found our great aunt's granddaughter here, which fills in a missing part of our family tree. By coincidence, she is a friend of a friend of our daughter in New Zealand."

The idea for a reunion

developed after Fraser Tordoff, a Bradford solicitor, contacted Ruth Keyworth, whose brother Courtney Tordoff is a senior BBC journalist, as they both independently researched their family backgrounds.

Fraser Tordoff, a warden at Holy Trinity Church in Queensbury, where the reunion was held at the weekend, has gone back as far as three brothers who in the late 1500s ran a smallholding in Bradford. "Most families come from that root," he said, "but there is also a theory we have links with Scotland and may have been related to Bonnie Prince Charlie. There is a place called Tordoff on the Solway Firth."

The event was billed: "A celebration of being a Tordoff, being married to a Tordoff, of being descended from a Tordoff." Fraser Tordoff said: "When you talk of family histories, it sounds dry and boring, but it comes to life when you meet relatives who can trace ancestors."

Mrs Keyworth, 44, from Telford, Shropshire, said: "I think it's wonderful. People who have come have had a pleasant time, and perhaps discovered distant relatives. Maybe we'll have another one next year."



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Low-fat Mars Bar is light years away from chocolate

By ROBIN YOUNG

BRITISH chocolate, already criticised by the European Union as a fraud upon the public, took another step towards degradation yesterday with the launch of two new "low-fat" chocolate bars by the confectionery firm Mars UK.

The move was condemned by chocolate purists as a further corruption of a product whose chocolate content is already so low that it had been suggested that it should be renamed "vegetable", to reflect the fact that much of its fat content derives not from cocoa butter but from vegetable oil.

The advertising for the new Mars products is pitched at weight-watching women, suggesting that some long-awaited moment has finally come which will transform their lives. This was rejected by WeightWatchers and medical authorities, who pointed out that the sugar content is still extremely high — though unquantified on the wrappings — and that fat, even when reduced, is still fat.

In taste tests in the offices of *The Times*, it seemed that the Mars technologists had at



Once bitten: a taster takes Flyte and finds it too sweet

least fulfilled their claim to have reduced the fat content of the Mars Bar without compromising its taste. With portions of bars sliced into similarly shaped chunks, no one could reliably distinguish the new Mars Light from the original.

The total proportion of fat in a Mars Light is 13 per cent, compared to 17.5 per cent in the standard product. The new bar is also smaller (but costs the same at 27p) so its fat content is about half that in the standard. It boasts "only 150 calories a bar", though that is still about a tenth of the

daily recommended total for many people. A spokesman for WeightWatchers said: "The difference is largely cosmetic. No woman should think this is something she can eat regularly and hope to retain her figure."

The other new product, a bar called Flyte (30p for a 45gm twin-pack), is described as the country's first low-fat, mainstream chocolate bar. It has a whipped centre and "only half the fat of ordinary milk chocolate". Tasters in *The Times* yesterday complained that it was tooth-

achingly sweet and had little or no taste of chocolate.

Most chocolate contains about 30 per cent fat by weight, and has a calorie count of about 500 per 100g (or 3½ oz). Chocolate with a high cocoa content is argued to be beneficial because it boosts serotonin and endorphin levels in the brain, producing a so-called "chocolate high". It also contains the stimulants theobromine and caffeine.

Mars is spending £8 million advertising Flyte nationwide and Mars Light for trials in the MTV and TSW television regions. A spokesman for the Chocolate Society, a fan club for chocolate with high cocoa content, said: "This is a sad day for Britain. These products are not healthy, they are not slimming, and they are not chocolate." A flavoured milk drink with 5 per cent alcohol has been criticised by Alcohol Concern as a lure to teenagers. Moo, which comes in strawberry and banana flavours, has been launched in Oxfordshire and could soon be sold nationwide. The makers, Entoute-Caisse of Witney, insist it is aimed at the over-18s.

Doctor 'dismissed worry over late pregnancy as silly'

By EMMA WILKINS

A WOMAN who gave birth to a Down's syndrome baby at the age of 35 had been told that she was silly to ask for a prenatal test, the High Court in London was told yesterday.

Sandra Hurley, now 42, from Aldershot, Hampshire, said that a military doctor dismissed her worries and refused to give her an amniocentesis test at a consultation in 1990. She gave birth to Matthew, now six, who needs constant care.

Mrs Hurley, who has two other children, said that Major Lawrence Roberts of Cambridge Military Hospital, Aldershot, told her the test was expensive and carried a 1 per cent chance of miscarriage.

Mrs Hurley is suing the Ministry of Defence for medical negligence. Major Roberts said that it was hospital policy not to consider amniocentesis tests for women aged 35.

Mrs Hurley said: "I knew there was something wrong with the pregnancy — it was a woman's intuition. He was arrogant and laid back about the whole thing. It was a case of, 'You're being silly, your



Matthew, 6, requires constant attention

fears are unfounded." Mrs Hurley, who wept as she gave evidence, said that she would have terminated the pregnancy if Down's syndrome had been detected. Major Roberts, who left the Army as a lieutenant-colonel, and is a consultant in obstetrics and gynaecology at Scunthorpe General Hospital, denied telling Mrs Hurley that she carried the same risks as a 26-year-old. He agreed that he would have advised her not to take the test. The case continues.



Sandra Hurley yesterday. She wept during evidence



MEDICAL BRIEFING

Save your arteries and stick to fruit

THE metabolism of a bar of chocolate — "low fat" or not — is rather more complex, but possibly less pernicious in its long-term effects, than is usually assumed.

Christine Williams, Professor of Human Nutrition at Reading University, said yesterday: "People who are trying to cut their fat intake often fail just because of an inordinate love of chocolate, and so this new low-fat bar may be helpful. In any case, a small amount of chocolate every day is unlikely to create health problems, but chocolate bars, low fat or otherwise, shouldn't be a significant part of the diet."

The fat content of a chocolate bar is derived from three sources, the cocoa bean, milk and cream, and vegetable oil. The cocoa fat is a saturated fat, but it seems that as it is composed of the fatty stearic acid it may not raise the blood-cholesterol level. When stearic acid is acted on by an enzyme in the body, it is partly converted to oleic acid, which is a beneficial fatty acid found in olive oil.

Regrettably, most of the dairy produce fatty acids found in a bar of chocolate are

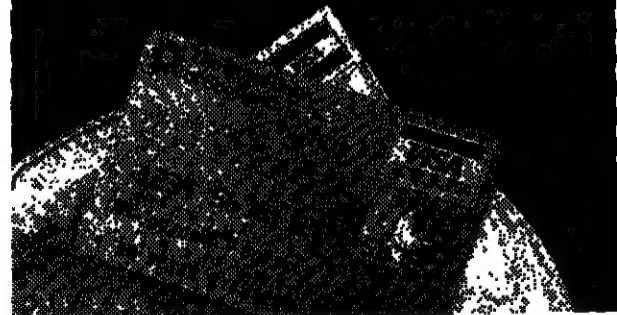
irremediably saturated. Only a small proportion are oleic acid. A bar of chocolate is also rich in sucrose, and therefore contains some fructose. Cardiologists are now regarding fructose with some suspicion as it seems that it may increase the level of triglyceride, another fat circulating in the blood, by stimulating its production in the liver. There is evidence that there is a relationship between the level of triglyceride in the blood after food, the length of time this triglyceride level is raised, and heart disease.

That link could result in the office worker who has a bar of chocolate and a glass of orange at the desk dealing a double whammy to his or her arteries. The orange juice, rich in fructose, could stimulate triglyceride production from the chocolate bar laden with saturated fats from the milk, and together raise the blood triglycerides and cholesterol to undesirable levels. It would be better to have the glass of orange by itself mid-morning.

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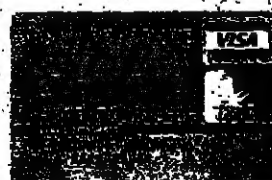
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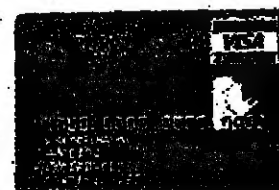
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Wastebasket

Veterans offered £1,000 prize in Gulf War survey

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

SERVICEMEN and women are being encouraged to participate in an extensive official study into the cause of Gulf War illnesses with the offer of a £1,000 cash prize.

Ten thousand current and former military personnel are to be sent detailed questionnaires about their health as part of an investigation supervised by the Medical Research Council.

Those selected at random to be sent the questionnaire are divided between servicemen and women who took part in the 1991 war, non-Gulf War personnel and veterans of the peacekeeping operations in Bosnia.

However, because the selection of military personnel from the three categories is random, there is no guarantee that any of the 1,100 British veterans who are ill will receive the questionnaire.

Their illnesses range from chronic fatigue to cancer.

The Ministry of Defence is providing £3 million for new research into the Gulf War illnesses. However, the health survey, drawn up by King's College School of Medicine and Dentistry, is being funded by the United States Defence Department, Britain and America, which has thousands of sick Gulf War veterans, are closely co-ordinating their research programmes into the illnesses.

Those who receive the questionnaire will be told that when they have completed the form, their names will be entered in a draw to win £1,000. All the information will be treated in confidence.

Although military personnel will not be obliged to participate in the questionnaire, they will be advised that their answers could help to

resolve one of the mysteries of the Gulf War.

The King's College researchers have formulated questions on lifestyle, drinking habits, exercise routines and health problems. There is also a detailed section on military experiences.

The researchers want to know whether the participants have been exposed to different hazardous materials, especially if it was during the Gulf War. They include smoke from oil wells, depleted uranium (contained in certain artillery shells), pesticides and dead animals.

The questionnaire also asks whether a Scud missile exploded in the air or on the ground "within one mile of you".

The health survey poses questions about a whole range of symptoms, many of which have affected Gulf War veterans claiming to be victims of war-related illnesses. They include chest pains, outbreaks of anger, difficulties in breathing, fatigue, double vision, numbness, stomach cramp and forgetfulness.

The King's College researchers will compare the answers of those who served in the Gulf War with those who were not deployed in the Middle East to see if there is a significant statistical difference in health between the groups.

Two other research studies have been commissioned by the Medical Research Council. Professor Nicola Cherry at the School of Epidemiology and Health Sciences at Manchester University is conducting a study of ill health among Gulf veterans. She will identify possible exposure to toxic pesticides and other chemicals, and will investigate whether service in the Gulf is associated with increased mortality or risk of cancer.

Patricia Doyle of the Department of Epidemiology and Population Science at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine is studying the reproductive health of British Gulf War veterans and the health of their children.



A driver making way for one of the elegant intruders. The village curate said: "They are great for calming traffic"

Nosey neighbours cause a flap

BY MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

INQUISITIVE neighbours are causing problems as they swan around a riverside village. They wander into private gardens, look into shopping baskets, and even peer into babies' prams.

Residents of Rosherville, near Colchester, Essex, are split on how to deal with swans who have defied attempts to prevent them wandering from the River Colne. The Rev Roger Wilkinson, the village curate, joked: "The swans are more elegant than most of the inhabitants."

"The birds wander onto the road all the time, but they are great for calming traffic. I get out and swear at them in French so I do not offend my parishioners and it seems to work. You cannot control everything in nature. Sometimes you have to live with it; not against it."

Opponents say that the scavenging birds create a mess with their droppings and cause traffic jams in the High Street. Three weeks ago, the local parish council of East Donyland spent £1,000 putting up a 30ft fence along the Ferry Road, a mudbank sloping down to the river, to try to keep the birds out of the village.

"The fence kept them at bay for a while," said Denis Horrigan, parish clerk for the past 43 years, "then five or six of the swans flew over. I do not know what we can do about that, unless we treat them as enemy aircraft and put up wires to stop them landing."

A spring tide last week helped the swans to further breach the village

defences. Mr Horrigan said: "The river flooded over an open grassy area and some of the birds floated ashore. There are about 120 swans living on the river here. I reckon the village is split 50-50 between those who want more measures taken to keep the birds under control, and those who do not mind them wandering about. I get letters from both sides."

Sheila Smith, who runs the post office and store close to the river bank, said the problem was made worse by people feeding the swans and enticing them out of the river. She added: "I am not anti-swan but I think they should stay in the water. They are in danger on land. They have been attacked by dogs and run over by cars. I have known them put their heads in prams and frighten babies."

Yesteryear morning two men arrived and began loading boxes of clothing onto a van. The watching customs officers moved in and found the drugs hidden inside the boxes.

Turkey has become the main source for heroin in Britain, accounting for most of the seizures. The drug is processed in Turkey and then moved west through the Balkans, often on long-distance lorry routes.

In a separate find yesterday, customs officers found 50 kilograms of cocaine hidden in a consignment of wood from Peru unloaded at Felixstowe, Suffolk. Four Britons and a Peruvian were arrested.

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'Selfish' nest raider had 129 rare eggs

BY RUSSELL JENKINS

AN ILLEGAL hoard of rare eggs, including those of the golden eagle and red kite, was found at a man's home after he was suspected of raiding a nest at a Royal Society for the Protection of Birds reserve.

Yesterday Alan Barrow, 34, was fined £2,500 by Bury magistrates when he admitted charges under the Wildlife and Countryside Act.

The RSPB became concerned last June when an egg disappeared from the nest of a rook at its reserve

on Anglesey. The British population of the bird has declined by more than 80 per cent since 1969 to fewer than 70 pairs, with a handful on Anglesey.

Barrow, of Ainsworth, Greater Manchester, and another man, Brian Mortimer, had sailed in an inflatable dinghy to protected breeding grounds on the island of Ynys Feirig, off Rhosneigr, North Wales. An RSPB warden noticed the egg was missing and police questioned the men when they returned to the main shore. Days later police and RSPB inspectors

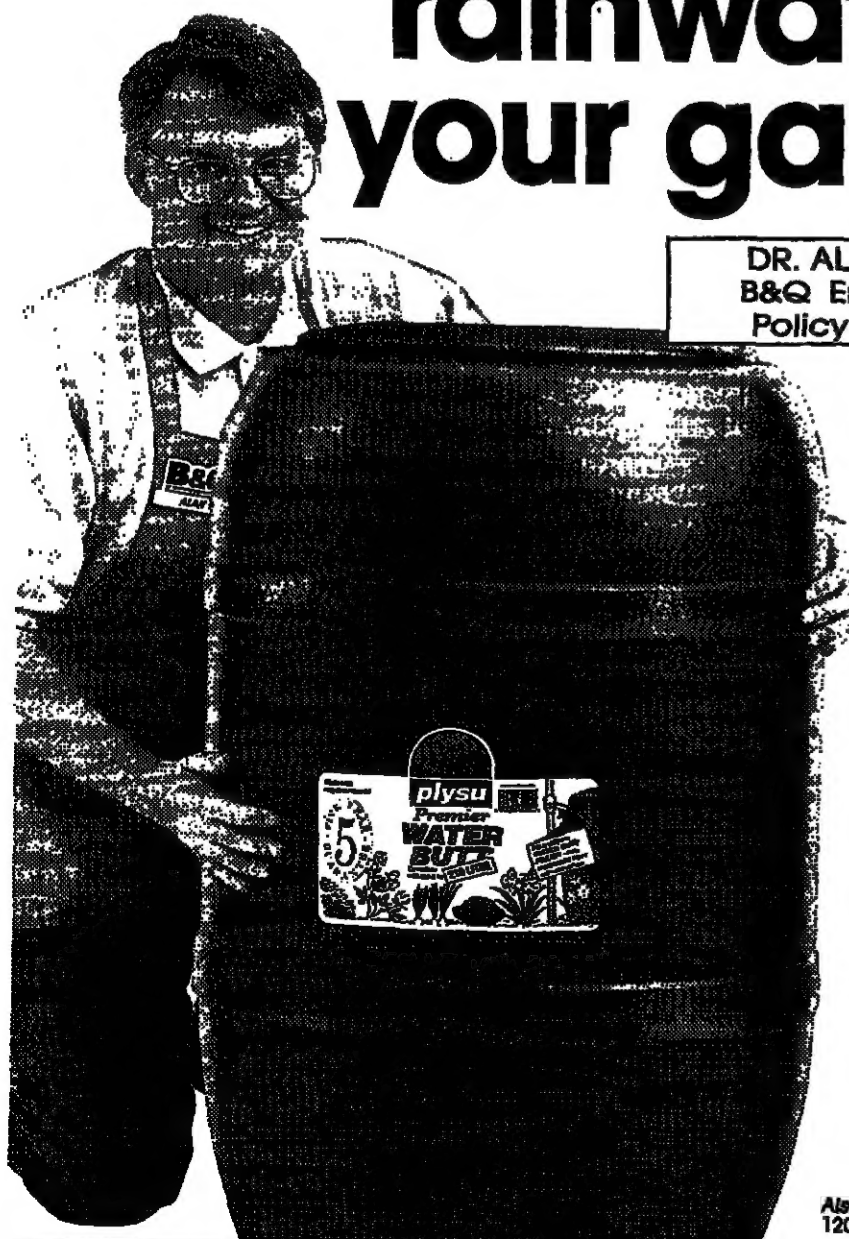
raided Barrow's home, where they discovered 129 eggs. They included those of the golden eagle, red kite, peregrine falcon, marsh harrier, bearded tit and avocet.

Many of the species are listed by the RSPB as "red priority" — high conservation concern. Roger Woods, for the prosecution, told the magistrates that they could fine Barrow more than £200,000. Barrow, who is unemployed, denied having a particular interest in collecting eggs and said that he played a minor role compared with

Mortimer, 35, of Bury. Mortimer, who was not in court as he is in prison for another matter, has admitted nine summonses involving eggs. They include stealing the rook's egg, a golden eagle's egg on the Isle of Skye and a hen harrier's egg from the Trough of Bowland, Lancashire.

Mortimer, who had a bogus RSPB card, had been suspected of being an illegal egg collector for some time, Mr Woods said. "The obsessive collection of wild birds' eggs is a very selfish, evil and pernicious activity."

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ABC OF RESUSCITATION

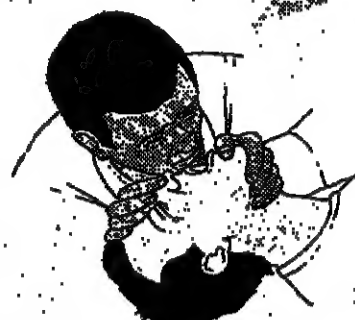
A-OPEN THE AIRWAY

1. Remove obvious debris from the casualty's mouth.
2. Tilt the casualty's head back and lift his chin upwards.



B-BREATHING

Checking if the casualty is breathing by looking, listening and feeling for his breath for 5 seconds.



C-CIRCULATION

Check the pulse in the casualty's neck for 5 seconds.



Not breathing, pulse present.

1. Pinch the casualty's nose firmly.
2. Take a deep breath and seal your lips around his lips.
3. Blow slowly into his mouth watching the chest rise. Let his chest fall completely. Give breaths at a rate of about 10 per minute.
4. If you must leave the casualty to go and get help, give 10 breathes first, and then return quickly, re-check ABC of Resuscitation and continue as appropriate.
5. Check for pulse after every 10 breaths.

Not breathing, no pulse.

1. Dial 999 for medical help or send someone to do it for you.
2. Re-check ABC of Resuscitation, and if necessary, give two breaths and start compression.
3. Place heel of hand 2 fingers breadth above ribcage/breastbone junction.



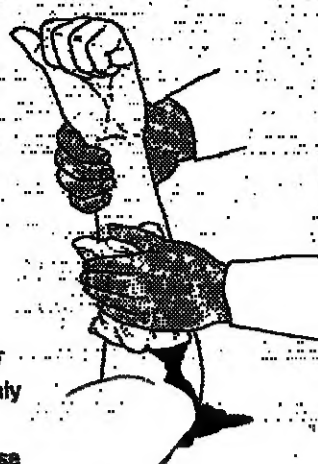
4. Place other hand on top and inter-look fingers.
5. Keeping arms straight, press down 4-5cm (1 1/2-2") 15 times.
6. Repeat cycle (2 breaths to 15 compressions) until medical help takes over.
7. If condition improves, confirm pulse and continue with artificial ventilation. Check for pulse after every 10 breaths.



BLEEDING

Large wounds: wear gloves if available; if not, ensure you have no cuts or grazes on your hands that may come into contact with blood from the open wound.

1. Ensure the wound is free from broken glass or other foreign objects. Expose the wound and apply pressure directly to the bleeding part with a pad or your fingers. If the wound is gaping, press the edges together.
2. At the same time, raise and support the injured limb taking care if you suspect a broken bone.
3. Place a sterile dressing over the wound and bandage firmly (if sterile dressing is not available - improvise - i.e. use a folded handkerchief and a tie). If blood seeps through the dressing, firmly bandage another pad on top of the original.
4. Send for medical help.
5. Do not remove dressings once in place.



Small Wounds: Wash with water and if necessary apply small dressing.

BURNS AND SCALDS

Treat burns and scalds in exactly the same way:

1. Place the burned area in cold water, preferably running, for at least 10 minutes; longer if the pain persists.
2. Remove any watch, jewelry, tight clothing. Do not remove clothing that is stuck to the skin.
3. Cover the area with a clean plastic food bag, cling film or other non-fluffy material, until seen by a doctor or nurse.
4. Never apply fats, ointments or sticking plasters.
5. Do not pop blisters.
6. Burns with blisters larger than the size of the casualty's hand need medical help. All deep burns of any size must receive hospital attention.



EYE FOREIGN BODIES

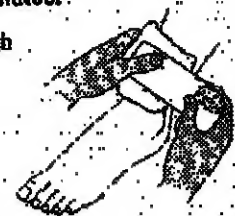
1. Ask the casualty to sit down facing the light and lean backwards.
2. Using your thumb and forefinger, separate the eyelids.
3. If you see a foreign body, wash it out with sterile water (tap water will do if sterile water is not available).
4. If this does not remove the object or if the object is embedded, cover with an eye pad.
5. Call for medical help.



STRAINS AND SPRAINS

Strains are caused by over stretching of muscles. Sprains are caused when the ligaments and tissues of a joint are wrenched or torn.

1. Rest the injured limb in the most comfortable position.
2. Place a wrapped ice pack, or cold compress on to the injured part for at least 20 minutes.
3. Compress the injured part with a thick pad of cotton wool and bandage.
4. Elevate the limb.



CHOKING

1. Encourage the casualty to cough.
2. Open the mouth and remove any obvious debris.
3. Bend the casualty forward and slap firmly between the shoulder blades up to 5 times.
4. Check the mouth remove any visible obstruction. Repeat backslaps if necessary.



5. For a baby, place him along your forearm, or for a young child, place him across your knees with head lower than the stomach and carry out backslaps as described above.

If backslaps do not work, try abdominal thrusts.

1. Stand behind casualty, put arms around the waist and clasp your hands together (one palm up and one palm down).



2. Give a sharp pull diagonally upwards. Repeat up to 5 times.

3. If this does not work, do not give up, call an ambulance and the alternate backslaps with 5 abdominal thrusts.

Never give abdominal thrusts to a pregnant woman.

If the casualty becomes unconscious, be prepared to follow the ABC of Resuscitation.

BITES AND STINGS

1. Remove the sting with a pair of tweezers then apply a cold compress.
2. Seek medical help if breathing becomes difficult or pain and swelling persists.
3. If casualty becomes unconscious, be prepared to follow the ABC of Resuscitation and call for medical help.
4. Bites that cause slight bleeding should be washed with water for 5 minutes then medical help should be sought.
5. Bites that cause severe bleeding must be treated as in section titled Bleeding then medical help should be sought.
6. Dog bites should be reported to the police.

KEEP THIS PAGE HANDY.

THERE ARE 50,000 FEWER NURSES THAN IN 1990.

How can this government justify the loss of so many nurses? Are we suddenly getting

less ill? Sustaining less injuries? Government underfunding has led to huge staff shortages in the NHS.

This year, only 9,000 nurses will qualify, compared to 37,000 in 1983.

Since 1990, 43,000 NHS hospital beds have been lost.

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into the ground. If the NHS has ever come to your rescue, make sure you return the favour tomorrow.

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ELECTION 97



Canvassing the oldest
floating voter

Polly Newton, pages 13



The loneliest
voters in Britain

The hand-over
of power

Tony's friends plan MOB rule

Labour's inner
circle reflects
the Clinton
style, report
Carol Midgley
and Dominic
Kennedy

WHEN Bill Clinton first ran for the White House in 1992 he gathered around him a coterie of close associates whom he had collected since childhood. This inner circle soon became known as the Friends of Bill, or FOB, a group mirrored by the MOB, or Mates of Blair.

The FOB were an eclectic group of school friends, fellow Rhodes scholars and students at Georgetown and Yale, Arkansas lawyers, policymakers and others. They became the most sought after guests at Washington parties and were in many cases appointed to some of the highest offices in the land. Others the President turned to for informal advice.

Many have disappeared during the scandal-ridden years of the Clinton presidency. Vincent Foster, the former deputy White House counsel, died in mysterious circumstances; Webster Hubbell, the former Associate Attorney General was jailed over the Whitewater land affair; Robert Reich, the former Labour Secretary, and George Stephanopoulos, once the devoted political adviser, have resigned to pursue separate careers. Only Bruce Lindsey, a White House counsel said to know every Clinton secret, remains as the closest aide to the President.

"Nobody collects friends like Bill Clinton," *The Wall Street Journal* remarked recently. "And nobody puts them to better use."

The MOB consists of Mr Blair's former college friends, flatmates, relatives and colleagues. Over the past three



Tony Blair's inner circle of friends and advisers, otherwise known as the Mates of Blair. From left: Lord Irvine, Patricia Hewitt, Tessa Jowell, Margaret Hodge, Alistair Darling, Baroness Hollis of Heigham, Jack Straw, Anji Hunter, Stephen Byers, Mo Mowlam, Alastair Campbell, Peter Mandelson

years since he became leader Mr Blair has put up a protective wall to ensure that only his closest friends and advisers have access to the inner sanctum. Aside from Cherie, his wife, the people closest to the Islington throne are:

□ Anji Hunter, 42, a personal friend of Mr Blair's for more than 25 years. They met as teenagers in Scotland, where they both went to school. Their friendship grew at Oxford where Ms Hunter attended the Oxford and County Secretarial College but there was never any romance. Officially she is the manager of Blair's private office and keeper of his diary, but has been called Blair's equivalent of Marcia Williams. Harold Wil-

son's famous personal political secretary. She is known for her ability to act both as Miss Nasty and Miss Nice, delivering Mr Blair's scoldings for him but also soothing the egos of those he has upset.

□ Alastair Campbell/Fiona Millar. Long-term partners and right-hand man and woman to the Blairs. Mr Campbell, 40, genial but tough press secretary to Mr Blair is his master's devoted rumormonger attempting to scare off any negative stories about the Labour leader.

In a Blair government, the former political editor of the *Daily Mirror* would be more of a political figure than press secretaries of late, in the mould of Bernard Ingham

rather than his successors.

His partner, political journalist Fiona Campbell, 38, is close confidante, secretary, organiser and wardrobe assistant to Cherie. Both couples have three children and live in Islington.

□ Peter Mandelson. Former MP for Hartlepool and arch spin doctor for new Labour. Various descriptions as the "evil genius", "Prince of Darkness" and "master of flattery" and loathed by some Tory and Labour MPs. Entrusted to run the Labour campaign from Millbank where he is said to have created a ruthlessly efficient machine. Has genuine Labour roots and devised the red rose symbol. Mr Mandelson is completely trusted by Mr Blair, which

some regard as the Labour leader's blind spot.

□ Lord Irvine, who has been part of the campaign team in Millbank, is expected to become Lord Chancellor. He introduced Mr Blair to Cherie when they both became pupils at his chambers in the 1970s. His wife Alison was formerly married to Donald Dewar, Labour's Chief Whip. Lord Irvine speaks daily to Mr

Blair and has been an important backroom player for three Labour leaders, advising Neil Kinnock on how to tackle the Militant Tendency and supporting John Smith, a friend from the same debating circle at Glasgow University.

□ Mo Mowlam, 47, MP for Redcar, Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary and a member of the so-called "North East mafia" which includes Tony

Blair and Peter Mandelson. Ms Mowlam, who married City banker Jon Norton two years ago, benefits from being one of the most likeable MPs in Westminster. She is very close to Mr Blair.

□ Margaret Hodge, 52, a Labour MP since 1994, previously led Islington Council for ten years during which it failed to investigate allegations against social workers of

child abuse, pimping and pornography. She dismissed the reports as gutter journalism.

□ Tessa Jowell, 49, has been MP for Dulwich since 1992. Her husband David Mills, a lawyer and fellow former Camden councillor, is brother-in-law of Barbara Mills, director of public prosecutions.

□ Jack Straw, 50, MP for Blackburn, is a former president of the National Union of Students, a barrister and former Islington councillor. He was elected to the shadow cabinet in 1987 and has been shadow home secretary since 1994. He has taken the party a long way towards the authoritarian Right on law and order.

□ Alistair Darling, MP for Edinburgh Central since 1987, is Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury and a member of Labour's Economic Commission. One of the few true Blairites in the Scottish Labour Party.

□ Stephen Byers, 44, Labour MP for Wallasey since 1993, was the employment spokesman who told journalists during the last Trades Union Congress in Blackpool that the party might sever its links with the unions.

□ Baroness Hollis of Heigham, 55, Labour spokeswoman for social security. She led the successful Lords revolt to secure a share of pensions for ex-wives, a policy which the Government was forced to adopt.

□ Patricia Hewitt, was Neil Kinnock's press officer. She helped to run his 1992 election campaign but has survived to be chosen as candidate for Leicester West. Director of research with Andersen Consulting since 1994 on a salary exceeding £100,000, she has become a leading writer on gender issues.

Blair the evangelist blesses faithful come to bear witness

RED-faced air traffic controllers reported a near miss at Battersea airport yesterday. Tony Blair's helicopter took off within minutes of John Major's and the two men narrowly avoided bumping into each other on the tarmac. Only last-minute evasive action by officials averted disaster.

Mr Blair was already some way into his itinerary. His press conference at Millbank Tower had started a day which came close to crossing the line between a political tour and an evangelist's rally. At Millbank, after a warm-up video featuring moving moments from his own speeches — a sort of Best of Blair '97 album — he strode to the podium with a swagger, and in a suit of which Gomez in *The Addams Family* would have been proud. This, said Gordon Brown, was "Trust Tuesday". To hear a man of Mr Brown's calibre reduced to lines like that is humbling.

There is no doubt that Mr Blair has relaxed since I watched him at the press conference opening his campaign a month ago. "The buck stops with me!" he cried, recklessly, a hundred journalists filing the remark away for future reference. But if the style of speech has changed, the content has not. The Labour leader proceeds like a man traversing a dangerous sea channel by stepping from ice-floe to ice-floe and zig-zagging fast, lest any floe fail to bear the weight placed upon it.

His ice-floes are the exhausted platitudes which are now the currency of his argument. "The talents and abilities of all our people" — the phrase has become so much a habit with him that he is beginning to run the



Matthew Parris, on tour with the Labour leader, finds that if the style of his speech has changed since the campaign started, the content has not

words together. He pauses as this floc creaks and sinks beneath him, then strikes out for another — "no return to boom and bust". Where from here? You can almost hear the mental computer whirr as a hundred approved soundbites are tested in a micro-second. "No going back to the past!" — the ice groans and he lurches on: "Smaller class sizes for five / six / seven-year-olds." Thus, and safely, did Mr Blair reach the other side. How will it be next Monday

day when the new Prime Minister meets (say) the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury?

"Can I seek your view on a half-point increase in interest rates, Prime Minister?"

"Opportunity for the many and not the few?"

"I beg your pardon, Prime Minister?"

"An end to the divisive policies of the last 18 years. From twelfth to eighteenth in the world prosperity league. No going back to the past!"



Tony Blair self-confident and relaxed among friends and supporters in Bristol yesterday

From Battersea, Mr Blair's helicopter proceeded at 130 knots to Gloucester. "As you will recall," said a spin doctor, microphone in hand, doubling as courier in our coach. "Tony went to Gloucester at the start of the campaign and met people who had switched from Tory to Labour. Today he'll be meeting more switchers and their families." We reached the civil service sports ground.

"There's your paddock," said a Labour minder of the Mormon tendency in charge of the press, to me. I escaped from my paddock. Mr Blair arrived. Everyone cheered. The sun came out. An excited vicar, in dog collar, stood sentry duty as flags in Labour's new episcopal purple colours were waved and a jazz band played *Ain't Misbehaving*.

The evangelist shook hands with a ten-year-old "who joined today". She appeared quite overcome. Then, like a sinner who had repented and come to tell the Good News, the former Tory MP Alan Howarth gave witness and asked Mr Blair to meet another former Tory candidate, called Gareth, in a rainbow rosette. They shook hands and everyone cheered. Mr Blair plunged around the crowd, shaking hands and signing broken legs. Mr Blair spoke. It was the same speech. "Our young people are the future". "Education for the many and not the few."

The leading article in *The Times* yesterday spoke of "a tower of dreams". To watch Mr Blair, and the faces of his wellwishers yesterday, was to appreciate the perceptiveness of that phrase.

He believes in himself, almost.

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We envy the British economy, says top German industrialist

GERMANY'S top industrialist yesterday extravagantly praised Britain's economic record, held up the country as a model for Germany and sympathised with John Major's refusal to sign the Social Chapter.

Hans-Olaf Henkel, who heads the German Confederation of Industry, strayed into the British election campaign with his comments but his chief target was the German political class. Like President Roman Herzog — who made a blistering attack on the Bonn elite at the weekend — Herr Henkel believes German politicians are reforming too sluggishly and need lessons from abroad.

In an interview for *The Times*, the industrialist said that the British would be right to celebrate Margaret Thatcher as the true winner of the election since her economic views now dominated political thinking. "Both of the leading British parties are basically following an economic course which in this country is only followed, and preached by, a party

Tory reforms have won a ringing endorsement from a man who wants them at the heart of Europe. Roger Boyes reports

that commands barely 5 per cent of the voters," said Herr Henkel, referring to the Free Democrats, the very junior partner in the German Government.

The result, he says, was that Britain was booming and was "already emerging as a real model for Europe". Germans should take heed. "How is it that foreigners have invested ten times as much in Britain since 1981 as in the German market, which is double the size? How is it that in the last four years more than 600,000 new jobs were created in Britain while our unemployment rose by an even greater number?"

Other European countries were in a logjam, unable to move forward quickly. "For them the traffic lights are on amber, but for Britain the economy is coasting through on a wave of green lights — unemployment is sinking from

month to month, net income is rising, public borrowing is down."

Herr Henkel, 56, a former IBM executive, said: "Either we continue on the current course at this speed, in which case we will have to take the medicine in the next two years or so; or we find the right kind of consensus and reform in time as the Swedes and the Dutch have managed to do. I work from morning to night in order to achieve the second outcome but in order to achieve it I have to point out the dangers of the first."

That meant, he said, taking Britain seriously. He had invited Tony Blair to the annual conference of his federation as a kind of teaching aid for German politicians. "I wanted the German public to see that a Labour leader can give a speech which I had heard, in terms of economic focus, from only a very few members of

our government coalition." However, he thought that Labour's emphasis on signing the Social Chapter was misplaced: "Personally I would subscribe to the opinion of Mr Major. If it is true that unemployment is the real issue in Europe, and not the working poor, then heads of government should turn to the United Kingdom and ask: what can you teach us? That is why I firmly believe the United Kingdom should be part of Europe."

Herr Henkel, most German observers seem to agree, irritates Chancellor Kohl and the government with his persistent pleading for rapid change. The Kohl team thinks it is going as fast as it can without destroying social consensus. "Last year saw more changes than in the previous ten, but it still not enough," said the industrialist. The time had come to shake up

not only the running of the economy, but also the complex electoral system, moving towards the British model of first past the post.

Some of Herr Henkel's initiatives — restricting sick pay and cutting taxes — have been taken up by the government. President Herzog's "time for a change" weekend speech owed much to Herr Henkel's personal influence. But the British paradox — popular discontent with the Conservative Party despite a thriving economy — was something that had to be faced by German politicians.

"Politicians have to decide: are they going to make a dent in history by celebrating record tenures in office — or by making society more competitive?" Britain, he said, could learn a few things from Germany, above all how to use work-training schemes to reduce youth unemployment. But, he concluded, "the Anglo Saxon model will certainly be the model of the next few decades ... so, lucky Great Britain."



Straying into the British election: Hans-Olaf Henkel

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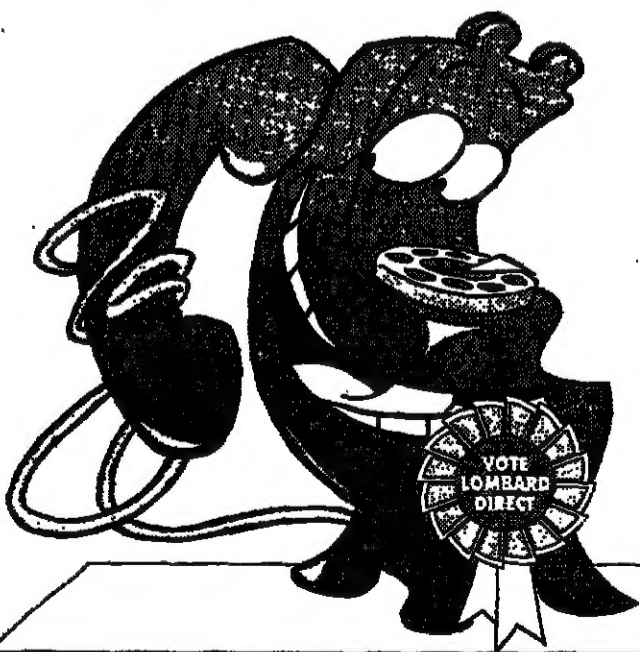
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Goldsmith says party will fight on beyond poll



The Tories are a lost cause says Sir James Goldsmith as he prepares for the role of Labour's European watchdog, writes Ben Macintyre

WHILE other single-issue groups may wither away after Thursday, the Referendum Party is a hardy perennial that will not die until its aim of forcing a referendum on Europe is achieved, Sir James Goldsmith declared yesterday at the party's first and last press conference of the campaign.

There is a huge organisation out there, Sir James, the Referendum Party's leader, said, adding that membership figures had now climbed to 230,000. "I believe that we need to continue as a movement. We will be a conduit for mobilisation. Those who are with us are very committed and will fight for the right to determine whether we remain a nation or become a province of Europe."

The decision taken yesterday by David Crabtree, Referendum Party candidate for Pudsey, to stand down in favour of his Conservative Eurosceptic rival was "regrettable" and "wrong", Sir James said. But he pointed out that Mr Crabtree's name would remain on the ballot paper, giving voters the "opportunity to endorse our campaign". Sir James denied that his party's efforts had critically weakened Conservative election chances. "The Tories have committed suicide ... There is no point in voting for the Tories. They're gone," he insisted, adding that a large

turnout for the Referendum Party would "demonstrate that it is the greatest protest movement since the war".

"The only way of controlling the Blair government and ensuring that they do not give in to Brussels is to have a strong Referendum Party," he said. The millionaire, who is standing against Conservative David Mellor in Putney, flatly declined to say what level of nationwide support he would consider a success, and instead emphasised that the first part of the party's platform, bringing the debate on Europe into the open, had already been achieved.

Most opinion polls predict that the Referendum Party, fielding 547 candidates, will not win a single seat, although the party yesterday cited a Labour newsletter from Gosport showing its candidate ranked second according to doorstep canvass returns with a projected 23 per cent, 13 per cent behind Labour.

With or without a presence in Parliament, Sir James plainly envisages a long-term role for himself as a watchdog of the future government, backed by an organisation that will continue to lobby until a referendum on Europe is called.

"We will not, in the future, allow lies to be told. We will be a channel for mobilisation against any new betrayal," Sir James said.



Goldsmith: "I believe we need to continue"

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Alan Hamilton finds that Britain's most remote electorate has little appetite for politics

Islanders are happy to keep campaign at bay

IT SEEMS like a good idea to track down the remotest voter in Britain, the one who will have to travel furthest to exercise his democratic right at a polling station.

The map and the Western Isles electoral register point to Hushinish, a huddle of three crofts on the western seaboard of Harris, covering against the onslaught of Atlantic weather.

To get there from the nearest ballot box at Tarbert is a 17-mile drive along a single-track road that twists and heaves among the dun-brown barren landscape. To the left the sea shimmers in an intense clarity of northern light. Every three minutes, the weather changes from dazzling sun to leaden downpour. It would be sublime were it not for the abandoned cars, cannibalised and rusting at every bend.

The road ends by a silver beach. I walk among wild-haired sheep to the furthest house, tripping an alarm of barking collies, and knock on the door which is opened a crack by an elderly lady. She eyes me suspiciously. I state my business, beg two min-



SNP's Anne Lorne Gillies: willing to sing for votes

utes' talk, and suggest a photograph.

"Och no," says she in her soft, precise, Hebridean way. "We are far too busy today. We are expecting visitors." The door is closed. I suspect her visitors are due a fortnight on Thursday, but I have made a serious tactical error in failing to change down from city overdrive to island bottom gear. People with time

do not respond to the full-frontal approach.

Lesson learnt, I have better luck next door with Donald McKinnon, who is happy to blear with a visitor from another planet. We discuss lambing, and the lateness of his daffodils, and how good the television reception is now that it is beamed from North Uist. After half an hour, we edge towards the matter in

hand. "I will certainly be voting on Thursday, but I have not bothered going to any of the candidates' public meetings in Tarbert. It's far too far to go to hear the same old guff." Only one candidate has so far made the trek to knock on Donald's door, the Tory Jamie McGrigor. Donald does not disclose his voting intentions, but he does not look much like a Conservative to me.

Tracking down McGrigor, an affable Old Elonian sheep farmer from the Argyllshire mainland, takes all of two days. His peeing, down-at-the-heel campaign headquarters on the quayside at Stornoway, the island capital, are permanently locked and unmanned. I begin to suspect him of lying low after providing this door town, where the Sabbath is sacrosanct, with its one tiny nugget of campaign sleaze. A Scottish Sunday newspaper claimed last week that McGrigor's ex-wife had once appeared in a French porn film.

McGrigor dismisses the story. He is far more concerned about the difficulty and expense of campaigning in a constituency of only 22,000 voters, the smallest electorate in Britain but scattered down an archipelago 130 miles long.

I decide to take lessons in Hebridean canvassing from the master, the Labour candidate and sitting tenant Calum Macdonald. Our meeting is delayed a day because a catalogue of bad weather, cancelled flights and missed connections have stranded him on Barra and me on Lewis. He eventually arrives and we drive to a croft at Sheshader, where Calum Macdonald is feeding his sheep. The two Calums talk amiably of crofting. We are all then totally absorbed by a strange catamaran sailing down the Minch, and Macdonald fetches his binoculars. The nearest



Labour's Calum Macdonald: "People know the issues already — they want to size you up as a person"

the whole encounter ever gets to arguments is whether we can read the letters P & O on the vessel's side.

Back in his car, Macdonald explains. "A general election in the Western Isles is like a by-election anywhere else: you get a much greater focus on local issues, and on the candidates. People know the issues already — they want to size you up as a person, because if you are elected, they will expect to meet you in the street."

Macdonald, a native Lewisman whose used to teach politics in California, appreciates the crucial values of politeness, patience and the oblique approach. "The standard Labour Party formula

for telephone canvassing is no use here. To ring somebody up and ask them point-blank how they intended to vote would be regarded as extremely rude."

Civility is all, Macdonald even regards his Tory opponent — who poses no serious threat — as a perfectly decent fellow, and thinks publication of the sleaze story was unkind and irrelevant. In private, he is less kind about his only serious rival, the SNP candidate Anne Lorne Gillies.

Gillies, a fiftyish and freshly remarried blonde with a successful past as a Gaelic singer, recording artist and television presenter, is from Oban, a six-hour ferry journey away, and now lives in

Glasgow. She therefore might as well be from Outer Mongolia, but she compensates by campaigning largely in Gaelic.

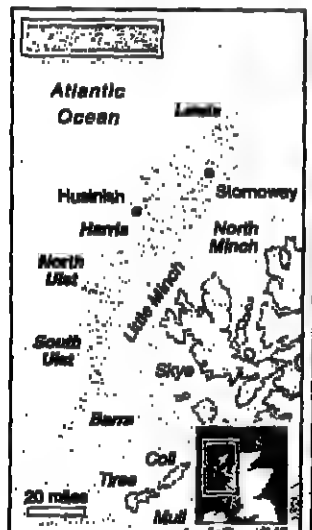
She will have held 28 public meetings by Wednesday night. Attendances are poor. "We have to do them, even if nobody turns up. If we don't, they feel ignored. If we do, they can boast that they didn't go."

I go with her one wild night to a schoolroom in Balallan, a crofting township in the middle of Lewis. Five people turn up. At question time feet shuffle, one man asks about money to maintain roads, and another asks about the building of a new community school, until another member

of the audience says, "Och, Anne, give us a song." She obliges. In Gaelic.

An hour later, in the downtown island capital, the reality of Gaelicdom is being enacted in Ali's Stornoway Bald House. A common whore, loud and inebriated, lunges in off the street seeking trade. In perfect Gaelic, the waiter orders her to machashoe, of which the drawing-room translation is "Kindly leave the premises at once; you are offending the diners."

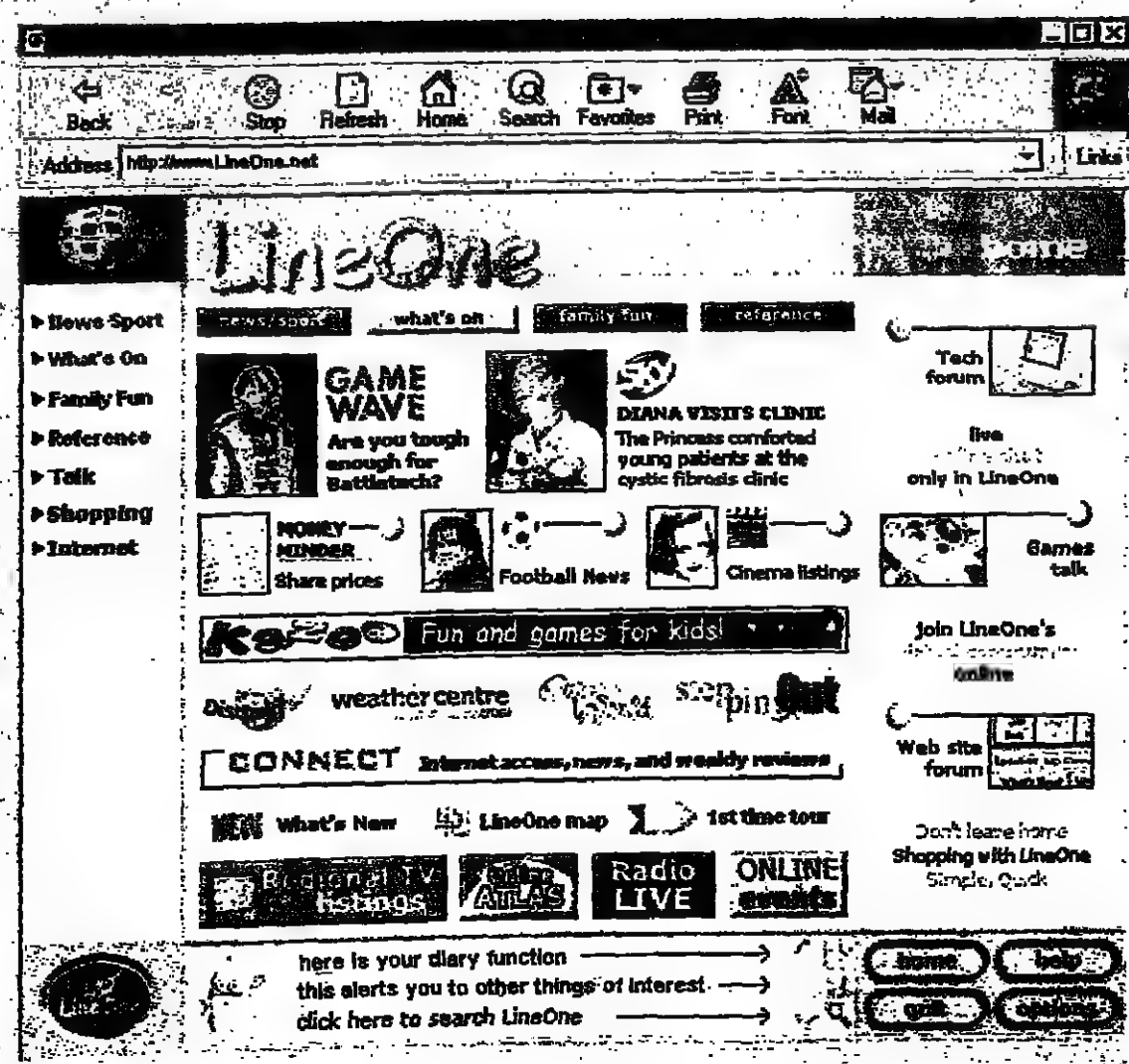
The waiter is Bengali, who moved to the Isles from Spitfields only two months ago. There are times when the full-frontal approach is called for after all.



Voter Donald McKinnon: will not travel 17 miles to "hear the same old guff"



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1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific information required.

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John Nye

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Helping of mixed metaphor spices up breakfast

ONE of the benefits of spending all day listening to election coverage on the radio is that it can be done in carpet slippers. But yesterday, John Major obliged me to pull on my wellies, trudge to a nearby farm and investigate the breakfast habits of pigs.

In the dreaded "ten past eight" slot on *Today*, James Naughtie had been asking Mr Major about the Tory divisions on Europe, citing contrasting statements by Kenneth Clarke and Michael Howard. Mr Major began: "You're making a complete pig's breakfast. If I may put it that way James, of two distinct issues."

A bloated electorate fed from the same old menu for six weeks is entitled to feel a frisson of excitement at the prospect of this new

RADIO WATCH

PETER BARNARD

offering, merged in the Downing Street kitchens from those better-known items, a dog's breakfast and a pig's ear.

So it was off to Plough Farm, where the farmer assured me that there is indeed such a thing as a pig's breakfast and it consists of cereals (British), soya (Asian), water (privatised) and skimmed milk (source unknown). Farmers mix this delicious repast using a computer (Japanese) and it emerges into troughs (British) having acquired the appearance and consistency of porridge (Scots).

I pass on this vital information to pre-empt accusations that Mr Major has lost control of his metaphors. Indeed, pigs' breakfasts are already catching on: within minutes of Mr Major serving one, Naughtie announced that, on another aspect of policy, Mr Major had made "a pig's breakfast of a comparison". For *Today*, read *Farming Today*.

If the eating habits of pigs freshened up the Major interview, Tony Blair's sartorial routine was to become the focus of *Election Call* on Radio 4 and BBC1. John Malone, from Melrose in Scotland, rang to say that judging by Mr Blair's tie — shiny blue with white spots — he's a plastic Tory. Why have a dummy when you can have the real thing?

Mr Blair: "The choice of my tie is made pretty quickly in the morning. It's the first that comes out of the drawer. So I wouldn't read too much into it."

So the Blair household is much like any other and it is only by a miracle that he has yet to give a speech wearing, shall we say, a donkey jacket. Let us hope he does not, or I would have to pay another visit to Plough Farm.



John Major at a business breakfast at the Savoy Hotel yesterday. If defeated tomorrow, he is expected to make an announcement about his future as Tory leader on Friday

Major may hold fort until July

THE Cabinet has all but given up on the election. What now preoccupies its senior members is the recovery that must follow as soon as possible if the Conservative Party is to regain its reputation as a fighting force.

John Major is being urged to make a quick announcement, after a Conservative defeat, that although he intends to step down as party leader, he will not do so until July, to enable a party leadership election to be held in orderly fashion and to allow the potential contenders to get to know their electorate, the new intake of Tory MPs.

Some ministers believe that Mr Major should not on Friday rule out resubmitting himself for the leadership in the July contest. They believe that he should say that he will decide on his own future after due consideration and that he

intends to go on as leader of the Opposition at least until then.

The supporters of this course believe that if the defeated Tories were immediately to mount a credible challenge to Tony Blair they could not afford to have a lame-duck leader for three months — which Mr Major would undoubtedly be, had he stated that he was staying on merely to oversee the election of his successor. The chances of Mr Major remaining leader beyond July are slim to negligible, but those ministers believe that he and his party will have more authority in those vital months if he has not announced that he is going for good.

If the Tories lose tomorrow one of the principal reasons will have been that the Labour Party hardly let them off the hook for five years. Labour's



The Tories are pondering how to prevent a bloody battle for the succession thwarting effective opposition to a Labour government, writes Philip Webster

recovery from the shock of the 1992 election defeat was swift: from the election of John Smith as party leader in July of that year, Labour has maintained almost unrelenting pressure on Mr Major's government.

Senior ministers believe that if the Conservatives are to win the general election after this one, the fightback must begin immediately. They want to give Mr Blair and his team a taste of their own medicine. How to do that when the

Conservative Party looks likely to be convulsed by a bloody leadership battle is the question that is most exercising their minds. They believe that, after the initial honeymoon period, following Labour's long years in opposition, the harsh realities of office might abruptly dawn on Mr Blair. The European Union summit in Amsterdam, which seems certain to throw up previously hidden party divisions, and the Bill providing for a referendum on

Scottish devolution, about which few English Labour MPs are enthusiastic, are two obvious sources of internal conflict, in addition to the tough economic decisions which may lie just over the horizon for Gordon Brown.

"We have got to hit them straightaway. Our route back to power in five years' time will be to put them on the defensive as soon as we can. Tony Blair will find that life is very different at ten points behind in the polls rather than in front," a Cabinet source said.

All eyes will be on Mr Major in the early hours of Friday if the result is only one-third as bad as the opinion polls suggest. He has taken a lot over the last few years, and could be forgiven for wanting to leave the scene as soon as is decently possible. But if the threatened bloodbath is to be avoided he may have to go on for a little longer yet.

them time to make their pitch.

Others such as Michael Heseltine, Michael Portillo and John Redwood, whose form is in the book for all to read, might believe they would profit from an earlier battle. If Mr Major decides to go quickly, or is forced to do so by the clamour of backbench opinion, there could well be a period of lengthy turmoil that would allow Mr Blair a clear run for his first 100 days at least.

Mr Major's bearing in the wake of a heavy defeat tomorrow night is regarded as central to the Conservative Party's immediate fortunes. A leisurely-paced contest would suit most of the leadership contenders — certainly those who are not currently regarded as the front-runners, giving

Labour landslide, has made no decision on whether to take up media invitations.

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, will stay in his Nottinghamshire constituency all weekend. But friends say that does not preclude his speaking on the telephone to radio, television and newspaper reporters.

Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, will also be maintaining a discreet silence in his Folkestone constituency where he spends most weekends. Norman Lamont, the former Chancellor, who would stand on a leadership ticket opposed to membership of the European Union, will remain in Harrogate.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Tory's dog to be kept on leash

The chairman of the Conservative Association in the Henley constituency of Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, was yesterday ordered by magistrates to keep Nettie, her Jack Russell terrier, under control. Elizabeth Tross Youle pleaded guilty to owning a dangerous dog. The court was told that Nettie sank its teeth into the hand of a woman cashier in a department store last Christmas Eve.

Campaign heat

Polling day could be the warmest so far this year with the temperature rising to 22°C (72°F) across much of Britain. Voters will not need umbrellas except perhaps in northern Scotland.

Forecast, page 28

Candidate bailed

Chris Thomas, 49, Lib Dem candidate for Waveney, Suffolk, was released on police bail after questioning about an alleged assault on a 10-year-old girl. A report will go to the Crown Prosecution Service.

D:Ream on TV

The Labour campaign anthem *Things Can Only Get Better* by D:Ream will be on BBC TV's *Top of the Pops* on Friday. Tories had asked for a radio ban on the rerelease, which is 19 in the charts.

ELECTION TRAIL

Conservatives: Michael Heseltine, Michael Portillo in the West; Virginia Bottomley in the North West; Stephen Dorrell in London; William Hague in Wales; Peter Lilley, Ann Widdecombe in the North; Nicholas Lyell in the Midlands.

Labour: John Prescott in the North and Yorkshire; Chris Smith in Norwich and Waveney; Michael Veecher in the South; Clare Short in Wales; Donald Dewar in Birmingham; Mo Mowlam in the North West; George Robertson in Dumfries.

Liberal Democrats: Paddy Ashdown, Shirley Williams, Emma Nicholson, Peter Thurnham in the South West.

On Screen: *Election Call* (BBC1 and Radio 4, 8.05am) with John Major.

CONNECTIONS

The Referendum Party candidate for Blaby, R. Harrison, has not withdrawn (report, yesterday) and is still standing. The Referendum Party candidate in Burnley, R. Oakley, is also still standing. P. Ballard does not represent the Referendum Party in Sherwood; he is the British National Party candidate. The Referendum Party candidate for Bristol West is Lady Beauchamp, not B. Slater, who is standing in Bury South.

Yesterday's article "An end to this liberal democracy" discussed bogus election candidates, and was accompanied by a photograph of Lisa Lovebuckett, the Rainbow Party, candidate in Hackney North & Stoke Newington. We are happy to point out that she is not a bogus candidate who has set out to confuse voters and has never misrepresented the party she stands for.

Redwood would be first off the starting blocks

If the Tories lose, challenges will begin swiftly, writes Andrew Pierce

JOHN REDWOOD will be one of the first heavyweight leadership contenders to deliver a public verdict on John Major's future if the Tories go down to heavy defeat.

On Friday, only hours after Mr Major — or, as seems unlikely, Mr Blair — has conceded defeat, Mr Redwood will appear on Radio 4's *World at One* programme. He is also on Radio 4's *Any Questions* that night.

Mr Major is expected to announce that he will stand down if the Tories lose, but to stay on for several months to try to ensure an orderly transition. That would also have the effect of impeding Mr Redwood. The temptation for Mr

Redwood to disagree with Mr Major over the timing of any contest, on two prime time media showcases, could prove irresistible.

Mr Redwood will divide the weekend between his Wokingham constituency and the Conservative 2000 think-tank in London, which he set up after his leadership challenge in 1995.

He will have to share the limelight on Friday with William Hague, who succeeded him as Welsh Secretary. Mr Hague's election result will not be declared until lunchtime on Friday. Mr

Hague, the bookmakers' favourite to succeed Mr Major, will be interviewed live on BBC Radio 5 Live and on ITN after the declaration. He will spend the rest of the weekend in his constituency. "He will be waiting by the telephone for the Prime Minister to ring in the hope that he will be invited to rejoin Mr Major's Cabinet," said one of Mr Hague's aides. "And my tongue is not in my cheek."

All eyes will be on Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, who has emerged as a strong favourite to succeed Mr Major, possibly with the

Prime Minister's backing. Mr Heseltine's aides declined to give details of his plans but he is expected to sound out colleagues by telephone from his Oxfordshire estate. No decision has been taken on whether to grant interviews.

Michael Portillo, a favourite of the Tory Right, has decided to maintain a low profile in his Enfield Southgate constituency and at his London home. So far he has not accepted any interview requests and is thought to be unlikely to speak out so soon after a defeat.

Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, has received num-

erous requests for interviews at his count in his Charnwood constituency. No decision has been taken on whether to take up the offers. The timing would be crucial. His result is not anticipated until about 6am on Friday, by which time Mr Major and Mr Blair will know whether either can form a government.

Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, will be at his home in his Edinburgh Pentlands constituency at the weekend. Mr Rifkind, whose 4,148 majority is vulnerable to a

Labour landslide, has made no decision on whether to take up media invitations.

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, will stay in his Nottinghamshire constituency all weekend. But friends say that does not preclude his speaking on the telephone to radio, television and newspaper reporters.

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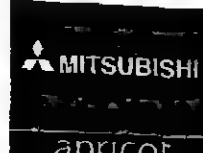


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THE TIMES WEDNESDAY APRIL 30 1997

How power changes hands in Whitehall behind closed doors

THERE is no ceremony to hand over the keys for 10 Downing Street. The British constitution works on the principle that Her Majesty's Government always goes on.

The main visible symbol of the passing of power is the transfer of the official car. If John Major leads the Conservatives to defeat, the most immediate change will be from the prime ministerial Daimler to back-up Jaguar.

Otherwise Sir Robin Butler, the Cabinet Secretary, and senior mandarins ensure that any changeover is seamless. It is also usually swift and smooth.

Timing largely depends on the outgoing Prime Minister, whether to concede during the night, or cling on hoping for some salvage from the wreckage. This is the element which Sir Robin has to leave largely unrehearsed, but even then various scripts are set in place.

A Conservative victory would signal little change. Mr Major is not obliged to do so, but would probably ask for an audience with the Queen. He would also reshuffle his Cabinet and junior Ministers.

In the event of a hung Parliament, decisions are left to politicians, and they must be given reasonable time to reach pacts and coalitions. The golden triangle of senior officials — Sir Robin, Sir Robert Fellowes, private secretary to the Queen, and Alex Allan, the Prime Minister's principal private secretary — may advise and run messages. But politicians must talk to each other and discuss terms.

The onus is to sort it out in such a way that a second general election is not inflicted on the British public.

But Whitehall is not anticipating such manoeuvring this week. With a sustained Labour lead in the polls, senior mandarins believe a Labour victory appears inevitable.

In defeat, or even facing defeat, Mr Major and Norma are expected to return to Downing Street in the early hours of Friday. They would thank staff and bid them farewell. But there is not much dignity — Mrs Major has already alluded to the brutal nature of the exit from office. Officials will have started packing the photographs, hi-fi, and other personal possessions from the private flat, to be stored in adjacent offices until the removal men are called. Just like holiday lets, cleaners would also start work to leave the rooms pristine for the Blairs.

Mr Major would ask for an



The mandarins are on hand to ensure that the post-election tidying up goes smoothly, writes Valerie Elliott, Whitehall Editor.

Preparations mean that any change of guard at Downing Street would be complete by lunchtime on Friday, with senior Cabinet appointments to be announced that evening

audience with the Queen to deliver his resignation. This would be expected about 11am or 11.30am. Meanwhile, he would approve the handover of certain policy papers for Mr Blair. His papers on Northern Ireland, particularly discussions with other political parties and any pledges made, are likely to be included in this batch, as are briefings on the Inter-Governmental Conference and the single currency.

Otherwise his papers would be collected and held in the Cabinet Office until it was time for their release to the Public Record Office. The Majors would leave Downing Street for Buckingham Palace. Mr Major would have a private audience to offer his formal resignation. The Queen would speak briefly to them both before they departed.

By tradition, the new Prime Minister sends a letter to the outgoing one, allowing him the use of Chequers for the night or weekend, but it is understood that the Majors have already said that in defeat they would return home to Srukeley, Huntingdon.

Mr Major of course would meet Mr Blair at the State Opening of Parliament, and within a month they would have a formal meeting to discuss a resignation honours list. Sir Robert Fellowes will have already invited Mr Blair to come to the Palace. At 11.30 or noon, perhaps a little later, Tony Blair and his wife Cherie would arrive in the official car of the Leader of the Opposition. Mr Blair would meet Mr Allan, and then have a private audience with the Queen, where she

formally asks him to form a Government. Mrs Blair would then be invited to join her husband to meet the Queen, before they leave in the official Daimler for a triumphant return to Downing Street.

By lunchtime, the new Prime Minister would address the nation and the media from the threshold of Downing Street before being cheered by Number 10 staff in the hall and being formally introduced as the new PM by Mr Allan.

There is no dignity. Mrs Major has alluded to the brutal nature of leaving office?

He would then be led along the ground-floor corridor to the Cabinet room for a formal meeting with Sir Robin Butler. One of the first tasks would be to show the Blairs the private flat. Mrs Blair is then expected to work out their domestic arrangements while Mr Blair gets down to the business of the job. He would be presented with a three-inch file of briefing papers on the job of PM, from the secret plan to press the nuclear button in the event of a nuclear war, to his expenses in office.

The pressing consideration would be key staff he wishes to bring into Number 10. Jonathan Powell, his present chief of staff, and Alastair Campbell, his press secretary, are expected to be the first appointees. Usual vetting procedures would be arranged later. Then the main task would be to appoint a Cabinet and Ministerial team.

Mr Blair is determined to show a smack of firm leadership from day one. It is expected that by Friday evening the senior posts in Government will be announced. Contingency plans are already in place at the Department of Education and Employment for a team of readers to help David Blunkett as the first blind Cabinet Minister.

Interviews with new Ministers take time, and some restructuring in Whitehall and new titles for Ministers are also expected to prolong final appointments. The deadline however is 6pm on Saturday.

day, when a Privy Council meeting presided by the Queen at Buckingham Palace is scheduled for the official swearing-in of the new Government.

Junior Ministers and party whips are expected to be named on Sunday and Monday. Officials are on standby in every department to be called in to greet new Ministers, arrange briefings and photocalls.

The priority for Mr Blair would be to plan a legislative programme to be set out in the Queen's Speech on May 14. Officials would also begin work at the weekend on papers to be circulated to Ministers in advance of the first Cabinet next Thursday.

Plans for the early Budget will also take precedence, as well as arrangements for the constitutional reforms. Mr Blair would also have to decide whether to send a Minister to a pre-IGC meeting in Brussels next Monday to symbolise a change of Government, or to let Sir Stephen Wall, the British permanent representative to the EU, attend as usual.



The tune changes but the show must always go on: removal men wheel Ted Heath's piano from 10 Downing Street after his defeat in 1974



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RESPONSE

Kevin Eason on the prospect of first-time voters turning out tomorrow

Apathy prevails as young fail to see the point

JAMES BERRY is one of the Thatcher generation raised during the 18 years of Conservative government.

He was born on May 1, 1979, just days after the Tories came to power and will vote in the general election next week for the first time—for Labour. He is one of about five million first-timers, young people aged between 18 and 21 who get the chance to vote on May 1, all members of a generation who have no memory of a Labour Party in power.

The winter of discontent, the class war between Tory and socialist and the shake-out of British industry mean nothing to these children of Conservatism, brought up knowing only Margaret Thatcher or John Major in Downing Street.

Yet apathy and alienation could keep the class of 1979 out of the polling booths. Even Mr Berry, a committed Labour supporter, believes that young people are yet to be convinced that voting in a general election matters. "There are people who can't see the point," he says. "I just think Labour is the party for the people and for change, which is what we need now."

A recent MORI poll indicated that 50 per cent of

"Thatcher's children" intended to vote for Tony Blair and new Labour. The young voters, according to the poll, felt that the most important issue was education, followed by jobs and healthcare, and believe that Labour has the best policies on those issues.

The poll indicated that 23 per cent of first-time voters will vote for the Conservatives, 11 per cent for the Liberal Democrats and 4 per cent each for the Greens, the Scottish National Party and Plaid Cymru. Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party attracted support from 2 per cent. Asked who would make a better Prime Minister, Mr Major scored 22 per cent and Mr Blair 43 per cent, with Paddy Ashdown on 8 per cent. Another 12 per cent did not like any of the main leaders and 15 per cent did not know.

An earlier MORI poll found that only 8 per cent of first-time voters believe trade unions were a top issue and in an age when youngsters travel more and are more likely to speak a foreign language, they also seem to be less worried about Europe than their elders: only one in five believed it was the most important issue of the election.

The problem lies in getting

the first-time voters to the ballot box, for MORI also found that only 36 per cent of 18 to 24-year-olds are certain to vote in this election. Those who do vote have opinions often influenced by their parents: their voting intentions are almost tribal and traditional, according to a series of interviews carried out by The Times.

Mr Berry underlined the point, less concerned about Europe than the domestic issues which he believes will decide his local constituency, Nottingham South, where Alan Simpson, a Eurosceptic, looks safe for Labour.

Mr Berry is preparing for his A levels at a sixth-form college in Nottingham and is hoping to go to university to study sports science. His parents work in the National Health Service: his mother is a health visitor, his father a community psychiatric nurse.

He admits that his parents' experience of the health service influenced his decision to vote Labour on his birthday. "Clearly, I was not getting glowing reports of what was happening in the NHS from them," he said.

"Having lived all this time under a Conservative Government, it is time for change."



James Berry, above, has made up his mind for Labour, as has Nicola Hodgetts, below left, but Michael Edwards, is undecided between Tories and Lib Dems



Students have power to swing key marginal

About 4,000 new voters in the university town of Loughborough threaten the Tories' 3,500 majority, says Kevin Eason

THOUSANDS of first-time voters could hold the balance of power in Loughborough, a key marginal at the heart of Labour's election strategy.

Loughborough is number 45 on Labour's list of marginal seats, but whether it achieves the necessary 4 per cent swing to win may be in the hands of nearly 4,000 students who live in the town in term-time and have registered to vote, among a total of 18,000 students in the constituency.

In 1992 students were on their Easter break, when Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, held Loughborough with a majority of nearly 11,000. Boundary changes have reduced that to a notional Conservative majority of 3,500, which is vulnerable to the large student vote. Mr Dorrell has since jumped into the neighbouring, and safer, seat of Charnwood.

The Students' Union mounted a campaign to get students to register and will be pressing them to vote. Kat Myers, a student organiser, said: "There is the feeling among young people that this election is nothing to do with them. But if young people don't participate in the election, they deserve what they get."

Ken Andrew, Mr Dorrell's replacement, is a company director from Watford, whose wife is a London barrister. At 52, he is fighting his first election and is confident of holding the seat against the Labour challenge from Andrew Reed, 32, who is a Blairite.

Loughborough is a microcosm of Middle England, apparently booming, with low unemployment and boasting the biggest Ferrari dealership outside London, which reports record sales. Old industry, based on train-making and textiles, is being replaced by an influx of high-tech companies. But

prospects of finding work in those new industries are tough for young people who drop out of the education system early.

Astra Charnwood, one of the new employers, boasts that 60 per cent of recruits are graduates, while Brush Transformers, the train-maker which for decades was the traditional employer for semi-skilled workers, has made about 4,000 workers redundant in recent years.

In a cluster of young people hanging around the town centre, Colin 19, was in the uniform of the young unemployed: baggy black jeans, shirt-tails hanging out, hair cropped Cantona bald. Clutching his burger and Coke, he said that he had worked for only a year since he left school at 16.

"I dropped out too early and now nobody wants me," he said. "I have been on training schemes but they teach me carpentry and bricklaying and every firm round here wants scientists. Not much hope for me and voting won't change it."

"Even if I get a job, the pay is lousy — a couple of quid an hour for stacking shelves or selling burgers. It's not worth it." That is the sort of despair Ms Myers, a politics student, is fighting. She said: "The range of opportunities for work for everybody has to be there. Whatever is said by politicians, young people feel insecure about their future."

"Student unemployment is not just the big issue, but changes in the workplace mean that young people are worried about low wages, injuries in the workplace, starting working life in debt. Young people will make up an eighth of the electorate this time. They should turn out and make sure that politicians are listening to what we want. It is our future."

'The Tories seem to be the only ones with any sense'

David Chater talks politics to five young people who have plenty of ideas

TIM OFFORD, an A-level student at Hills Road Sixth Form College, Cambridge, is determined to make use of his vote on his eighteenth birthday in the new Cambridge-shire South constituency, where the notional Conservative majority is nearly 19,000.

"I will vote because then you feel you have done something, and it will be Tory. They seem to be the only ones with any sense. I was born at the time when a Tory Government won the election and as far as I am concerned, they are not doing particularly badly for us."

"I have got a bad feeling about Tony Blair: he goes on about all these idealisms

which seem a bit too much. I think the country is going pretty well at the moment. I am having a great time, so it can stay the same for me."

Dalia Greenwood, an A-level student at The Henrietta Barnett School in Barnet, north London, will be voting on her eighteenth birthday like the other young people in this survey. She will vote in the new Finchley and Golders Green constituency, formerly Hendon South, held by the Conservatives with a large majority in 1992.

"My parents, who are both

lawyers, are also both Labour. I have been quite influenced by them because we often have discussions. I am not completely sure how I will vote, although I am probably going to vote Labour because I think they are planning to help state schools. I am also considering the Liberal Democrats because they are very pro-Europe which I am as well. I think there is a lot of stability in unity between countries."

Michael Edwards, from Canterbury, Kent, won in 1992 by Julian Brazier, Conservative, with a majority of 9,997.

"I don't like Tony Blair very much. I don't think of him as genuine. I think he is slightly fake."

is studying for three A levels at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys. He is undecided whether to vote Tory or Liberal Democrat.

"I have mainly looked at issues which affect me personally. I am more interested in environmental issues and like the policies of the Liberal Democrats, especially promoting public transport and reducing the use of cars."

Nicola Hodgetts, from Rhyl in north Wales, a student at the nearby Emrys at Iwan grant-maintained school, is likely to vote Labour in the new Clwyd West constituency. The old Clwyd North West was won by the Conservative Rod Richards in 1992.

"I will probably vote for Labour because I like the proposals from our local candidate, Chris Ruane. When he says he wants to cut down on crime, he seems to know what the local people want. A lot of people I know have been victims of crime."

"Education is also an important issue and Labour wants to cut class sizes, which I think is very important. What I don't like about the Conservatives is that the rich get richer and the poor poorer."

David Best is planning to vote Labour in the Oldham West and Royton constituency held by Labour's Michael Meacher. He is studying for an NVQ in carpentry and joinery at Oldham College on release from his job with Oldham Council. "I think it is about time they [Labour] had a chance," he said. I work for the building service at Oldham Council and if the Tories stay in, our jobs at the council are pretty well on the line."

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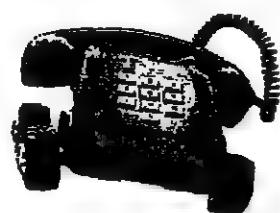
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'Idiot with fax' defies besiegers in Texas

FROM GILES WHITTILL
IN LOS ANGELES

THE siege of separatists in Texas entered its third day yesterday with no end in sight, as the man whom police recently called "an idiot with a fax machine" refused to surrender.

Arrest warrants for kidnapping and organised crime failed to intimidate Richard McLaren and his Republic of Texas followers, who are holed up in the rugged Davis Mountains and apparently spoiling for a fight with the authorities. Mike Cox, a police spokesman, admitted that his top priority was to avoid a repeat of the 1993 Waco disaster in which 80 people died.

"We think we can do it right," Mr Cox said, but rapid developments yesterday belied such confidence. As dozens of local residents were evacuated to motels and a SWAT team joined police sur-



Texas police officers man a roadblock on Highway 166 in Fort Davis where Richard McLaren and his Republic of Texas are holed up

rounding the compound, Mr McLaren announced that his only interest was in "getting the foreign agents off Texas soil". An unknown number of paramilitary extremists are guarding Mr McLaren's five-acre "crucifix" with sniper

rifles and petrol-bomb boobytraps. Three group members kidnapped and released an elderly couple living nearby at the weekend, triggering the siege and bringing mounting pressure for swift police action to end it. "You're dealing

with a crazy person," Sue Clark, a frightened Fort Davis homemaker, said yesterday. "I really think [Mr McLaren] could do a suicide thing." Dishevelled, intense and fond of making headlines, Mr McLaren claims his

group is the legitimate government of a Texas illegally annexed by the United States in 1845. He has waged what the Texas Attorney-General called a campaign of "paper terrorism", seeking to clog courts with bogus claims on

state and private properties. "He's loving every minute of this," said Joe Roe, whose door was shot down and shoulder injured with shrapnel in Sunday's kidnapping. "He's bouncing off walls at the moment with all this

media interest, but I believe he'll come out for a coffin fitting." Academics have dismissed Mr McLaren's interpretation of history as "goofy". Between 1836 and 1845 Texans voted three times to join the US.

Pentagon poised to cut forces by 50,000

FROM TOM RHODES
IN WASHINGTON

THE most comprehensive review of United States defence since the end of the Cold War is expected to result in a reduction of up to 50,000 American fighting troops as the Pentagon paves the way for a new generation of advanced weapons.

In what many US military commanders view as a series of drastic measures, the blueprint for American defence also seems certain to include substantial cuts in the US Air Force and Navy budgets for jet fighters.

The quadrennial defence review, to be made public next month, may even reverse Pentagon doctrine designed to manage two "nearly simultaneous major regional conflicts" at the same time.

William Cohen, the US Defence Secretary, gave a clear signal this week that a robust modernisation programme was needed to shape the security environment, protect and promote America's national interests and combat terrorism and other uncertain threats in the future.

"We don't want to engage in a fair fight, a contemporary war of attrition. We want to dominate across the full spectrum of conflict so that if we ever do have to fight, we win on our terms," Mr Cohen said. "We are developing the kind of systems, the kind of leap-ahead technologies whereby we can in fact defend at a much further range away."

Pentagon officials said yesterday that payment for such global weaponry was certain to result in reduced force numbers. The current roster of active service troops stands at one and a half million, down by more than 30 per cent in the last decade.

The US Army is expected to be the hardest hit, losing up to 10 per cent of its 495,000 active duty soldiers, while there are likely to be demands on the joint US Air Force and Navy budgets of \$153 billion (\$94 billion). The cuts would help to pay for new technologies, including computerised artillery systems and biological weapons detectors. Mr Cohen has been told to maintain the \$250 billion-a-year Pentagon budget.

WORLD SUMMARY

90 killed in China rail collision

Beijing: Two passenger trains collided yesterday in China's central Hunan province, killing 90 people and injuring more than 300, the Xinhua news agency said. The crash occurred on one of China's main railway links between the capital and the southern town of Guangzhou.

Woman savaged

New York: A leopard that escaped from its cage at an animal sanctuary near Oklahoma City and killed a woman was shot dead by police marksmen (Reuters). The 70lb female Persian leopard was ambushed when she followed a baited trail that led back to her enclosure. Earlier, the cat had mauled to death Brenda Esquivel, 52, a Puerto Rican tourist.

Belgian strike

Brussels: Magistrates from Brussels and the francophone south of Belgium staged symbolic strikes in protest at accusations of incompetence in the country's child kidnapping, abuse and murder scandals. An official report accused them of sloth and a lack of professionalism. The last such strike was in 1989, over similar complaints. (Reuters)

Smoked out

Birchbich: A soldier is suspected of starting a series of explosions at an artillery depot in the Russian Far East by careless smoking. The Trans-Siberian railway was blocked and 4,000 people evacuated as metal fragments from explosions showered the area for two days. (AP)

Canada flood

Winnipeg: Red River floods surged into Canada, inundating the dyke-protected town of Ste Agathe, 15 miles south of Winnipeg. Most of the 500 residents had been evacuated. (AP)

Syrian nerve gas raises war fears

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

MIDDLE East peace efforts suffered another blow yesterday as Israel issued an unprecedented warning to President Assad after the disclosure that Syria has, with Russian aid, begun to manufacture a lethal new nerve gas.

David Levy, the Israeli Foreign Minister, reacted angrily, saying: "The other side must understand that it alone does not control something serious like this, but that we also control things that are seven times more serious."

If a minute quantity of the VX gas comes in contact with exposed skin it can kill in seconds. It permeates light clothing and footwear and, once dispersed, can remain deadly for days or weeks.

Reports of the Syrian development came in the daily Haaretz and were later confirmed by Yitzhak Mordechai, the Defence Minister. Zeev Schiff, the newspaper's top defence specialist, said: "Syria has reached early stages of a

process by which the gas is mounted on surface-to-surface missiles it has stockpiled."

The Syrians already have large quantities of sarin, a gas that acts against the respiratory system. "This time they have entered a new area, a new gas named VX," Mr Schiff told Israel radio in an interview that spread anxiety among Israelis who regard a war with Syria as a strong possibility.

Mr Levy did not spell out in detail the weaponry involved in his threat. Israel has repeatedly refused to comment on reliable foreign reports that a heavily guarded facility in a Tel Aviv suburb is working on advanced biological and chemical weapons. The extent of Israel's biological and chemical warfare capability is subject to a military censorship that is imposed on all correspondents. That censorship has failed to keep secret Israel's arsenal of at least 200 nuclear weapons which, in the last resort, could also be used in response to any Syrian attack.

Most Israelis back Palestinian state

Jerusalem: For the first time an opinion poll has found that most Israelis favour an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip — a move opposed by the Government (Christopher Walker writes). The poll, by Tel Aviv's Jaffee Centre for Strategic

Studies, found 51 per cent supported such a solution to achieve peace in the Middle East. Last year, in a similar poll, 48 per cent backed the idea, while a decade ago the figure was 20 per cent. "It is a very major change," Asher Arlan, the professor who directed the survey of 1,216

Israelis, told The Jerusalem Post. "And it is only one of a number of indicators of continued and growing support for the peace process."

Only 31 per cent of those polled opposed returning any of the Golan Heights to Syria, compared to 35 per cent last year.

Haaretz added that Syria had not signed an international chemical warfare agreement banning the manufacture and storage of chemical weapons that took effect yesterday. Iran and Israel have both signed, but, like Russia, have yet to ratify it.

The chemical warfare threat came as attempts to resume Israeli-Syrian peace talks remained deadlocked. Damascus refuses to go back to the negotiating table until Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, repeats a pledge it claims was given by his Labour predecessors to return the whole of the occupied Golan Heights in exchange for peace. Mr Netanyahu has made clear that the strategic Golan plateau, conquered from Syria in the 1967 war, will not all be returned.

Yesterday Mr Mordechai told reporters that Israel had found out about the VX gas a few months ago. It is believed that there are chemical weapon plants close to Aleppo in northern Syria and outside Damascus. Israeli commanders are understood to have discussed a pre-emptive strike similar to that in 1981 against Iraq's nuclear reactor.

Mr Mordechai said of Syria's VX acquisition: "I discussed it with US Defence Secretary (William) Cohen during my last visit to the United States. I discussed it with the Government of the United Kingdom and I think all Western countries know what Syria is producing."



Levy: has biological and nuclear weapons



US astronaut Jerry Linenger, back to camera, and Russian cosmonaut Vasili Tsibliev, dismantle dust collectors on the outside of Mir space station during a space walk that lasted almost five hours yesterday

Hong Kong dons attack protest ban

FROM JONATHAN MERRY IN HONG KONG

A MAJORITY of Hong Kong's university teachers of law, politics and public administration will today present Tung Chee-hwa, Chief Executive-designate, with a statement attacking his proposed laws to limit demonstrations and forbid financial links with foreign political bodies.

The statement, signed by more than 200 academics, rejects Mr Tung's contention that Hong Kong's "fragile" society can easily be shattered by public demonstrations or by foreigners attempting to subvert social order.

China's National People's Congress has voted to strip Hong Kong's existing laws, which do not require police permission to demonstrate or forbid organisations and parties from receiving funds. The laws will cease on 1 July, the date of the handover.

The academics contend that Hong Kong people are rational and law-abiding and there is no threat to social order. But Mr Tung's proposed laws, they say, are a threat to individual rights.

Women sue New York finance firm for \$110m

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

THREE women have filed a \$110 million (\$68 million) lawsuit against a New York investment firm, claiming that they were sexually harassed and that the company's busy trading floor, scene of the alleged abuse, was known as "the pit".

The women claimed that male colleagues at Lew Lieberman & Co used them as "human towels", wiping their wet hands on their hair when they returned from the lavatory. Senior men at the company would allegedly unzip their trousers and demand oral sex, while others tugged at the women's clothes in the hope of catching a glimpse of their bodies or to "check" what they were wearing underneath.

Kimberly Casper, 26, Linette Cinelli, 25, and Deana Callendo, 21, who were employed in varying support roles at the firm, were supported in their Manhattan Federal court lawsuit by the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Commentators said that the case may point to wider problems in the world of New York finance houses.

The company said that it would defend the allegations "vigorously". An unidentified male employee told the New York Post, that the women, who no longer work at Lieberman, were simply interested in extracting some money from the company. "We're a friendly office, we joke around," he said.

cash for questions scandal.

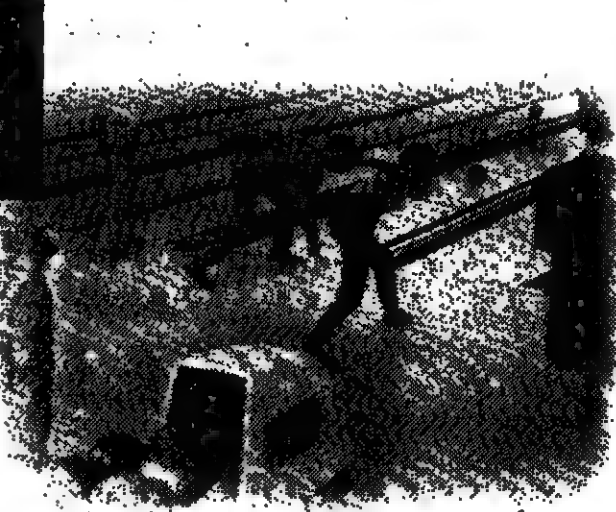
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Europe returns envoys to Tehran with rebuke over Iran-sponsored terror



Iran's stance, by Behrendt in De Telegraf, Amsterdam

By MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

EUROPEAN UNION foreign ministers agreed yesterday to return their ambassadors to Tehran. At the same time they announced the indefinite cancellation of Europe's high-level "critical dialogue" with Iran and a series of new restrictions in response to official Iranian support for terrorism.

All remaining Iranian intelligence agents are to be expelled from EU countries, and no visas will be granted to any Iranian with security or intelligence links. Visits by ministers to and from Iran are to be cancelled. The arms embargo against Iran will also be enforced.

The ministers said they had always wanted a constructive relationship with Iran, but "progress can only be made if the Iranian authorities respect the norms of international law and refrain from acts of terrorism, including against Iranian citizens living abroad, and co-operate in preventing such acts".

The new measures have been taken in the light of the Berlin court judgment this month that directly implicated senior Iranian officials in the murder of Kurdish exiles in a restaurant. The EU urged other countries to align themselves with the declaration.

"The message to Iran is clear: there can be no business as usual," the Foreign Office said. "We have taken

measures which seek to reinforce the message and which show that acts such as the Mykonos [restaurant] murders cannot go unanswered."

The EU measures do not call for any trade embargo or restrictions on EU investment in Iran and participation in Iranian trade. Diplomats said such proposals, advocated by Washington, were not discussed.

The International Rushdie Defence Committee, formed to fight the law against the writer Salman Rushdie, yesterday condemned as "shocking" the decision to return ambassadors to Tehran, and said the action of the ministers "is not so much a slap on the wrist, it's more a nod and a wink to Iran. It sends a clear message that Iran can get away with murder in

Europe." Iranian exiles also criticised the EU's decision to send back ambassadors.

At a rally in Luxembourg organised by the National Council of Resistance of Iran, thousands of demonstrators called for the cutting of all commercial and diplomatic links with Tehran.

The National Council of Resistance, which maintains operational centres in Iraq and has engaged in an intensive lobbying campaign throughout Europe, welcomed the measures but said they did not go far enough.

Iranian state radio said yesterday that the measures would not affect the Islamic republic because of Iran's extensive relations with countries

outside the EU. "Neither attempts by the White House [to isolate Iran] nor decisions by the European Union will have any effect on the sacred government system of the Islamic Republic of Iran," state-run Tehran radio said in a commentary broadcast before the measures were officially announced.

In response to the end of the "critical dialogue", broken off immediately after the Berlin judgment, Iran's parliamentary foreign relations committee urged the Government to end all talks with the EU. It said such talks could be useful only when they were coupled with good intentions.

Leading article, page 23

Single currency battle dominates French election

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS

EUROPE dominated the French parliamentary election campaign yesterday as new figures signalled more public spending cuts in the run-up to monetary union.

As the Gaullist-led coalition unveiled a manifesto that pledged reductions in tax, the National Statistical and Economic Institute said the public deficit exceeded forecasts last year.

Although the Government failed to meet its 4 per cent target by just 0.2 per cent, the difference will make it more difficult for France to meet an already tight timetable for joining economic and monetary union (EMU).

Economists said another round of austerity measures would be necessary if France was to fulfil Maastricht criteria which demand a public deficit of no more than 3 per cent of gross national product. Their warnings overshadowed the optimistic but vague promises made yesterday in the five-page manifesto presented by Alain Juppé, the Gaullist Prime Minister, and François Léotard, leader of the centrist UDF party.

They pledged to reduce income tax and reform business taxes, but did not make specific commitments. They also vowed to present a five-year plan to limit rises in public

spending to less than the rate of inflation, and encourage shorter working hours to create jobs.

M Juppé and M Léotard restated their commitment to join monetary union and said they would promote European social policies to "make France the motor of a citizens' Europe".

However, the centre-right coalition has tried to play down the European debate, aware that it is divided over the question and that many of its voters are hostile to Brussels. They say they need to curb public spending to improve French competitiveness and reduce an unemployment rate of 12.8 per cent, regardless of the single currency.

Edouard Balladur, the former Prime Minister, said yesterday: "Maastricht or not, we need to reduce our deficits, liberate our economy and reduce our taxes."

However, Europe continues to dominate the campaign. The publication of the 1996 public deficit calls into question M Juppé's claim that he has brought French public finances under control and can now move into a new tax-cutting phase.

The left-wing Opposition says President Chirac called the snap election in the knowledge that his Government

would have to introduce unpopular measures this autumn. Yesterday the newspaper *Le Monde* said it was increasingly improbable France could meet the criteria for monetary union without additional savings.

Right-wing Eurosceptic voices are starting to make themselves heard. The anti-Maastricht campaigner, Philippe de Villiers, said: "Those who choose to sacrifice the nation to the single currency will lose that precious thing, the nation, and will gain euro-unemployment."

The Socialist leader, Lionel Jospin, has promised to increase public spending, compromising French chances of meeting the criteria on monetary union. But the impact of his message has been limited by Socialist splits over Europe.

M Jospin, who yesterday met his Communist counterpart, Robert Hue, to sign an electoral pact, knows many of his colleagues want him to respect Maastricht orthodoxy.

□ Copenhagen: Denmark's appeal court will hear charges brought by 11 citizens against the Prime Minister, Poul Rasmussen, on May 26. The 11 accuse him of violating the constitution by committing the country to the Maastricht treaty, judicial officials said. (AFP)

Murder of seized teenager angers Taiwan

FROM REUTER
IN TAIPEI

TAIWANESE were outraged yesterday by the murder of an actress's daughter who had been kidnapped on April 14.

The naked body of Pai Hsiao-yen, 17, only daughter of Pai Ping-ping, was found floating in a river in Taipei county late on Monday. Her hands and legs were bound with rope and she had been weighed down with hammers, police said.

Yang Jih-sung, the coroner, said she had died of strangulation and had been dead for at least eight days.

Her kidnappers had demanded a ransom equivalent to £3 million, including half of one of her little fingers with their note. Her mother, who is also a television chat show hostess, wanted to pay, but the kidnappers called off a planned meeting. Police arrested four people last Friday night, but three suspects remain at large.

Police and military agencies yesterday stepped up their island-wide search for the missing suspects and mounted stringent checks at sea ports and airports.

"President Lee is extremely saddened. He is especially outraged by the criminals' inhuman method," the presidential office said. But the opposition New Party called on him to apologise to the public for Taiwan's deteriorating law and order.

The main opposition Democratic Progressive Party demanded the resignations of Lien Chan, the Prime Minister, Lin Feng-cheng, the Interior Minister, and Yan Kaohiao, the National Police Administration chief.



Actress Pai Ping-ping, left, with her daughter, Hsiao-yen, not long before the kidnap

Chirac to seek ban on human cloning

BY ADAM SAGE

PRESIDENT CHIRAC of France is to seek an international agreement banning scientists from cloning humans.

The French President said yesterday that cloning "would in effect negate the very foundation of the identity and dignity of the human being". He described it as a degrading attack on the human condition and said: "It must be forbidden."

M Chirac said France would ask its European partners to adopt a declaration seeking a UN ban on human cloning. He would also raise the question with President Clinton at the next G7 summit in Denver in June.

"Some people imagine they will achieve immortality through cloning," the President said. "Others think they will be able to rediscover a loved one. Cloning has been spoken of as a new means of reproduction." His reaction was a "vehement, categorical, definitive and ethical condemnation of all reproductive cloning of human beings."

□ Bonn: German scientists, haunted by memories of Nazi attempts to engineer a "master race", urged that human cloning should be banned absolutely, everywhere and forever. "The cloning of humans would be a violation of human existence," Wolfgang Fruhwald, president of the German Research Association, said in Bonn. (Reuters)

Yeltsin's puppet held for ransom

FROM RICHARD BEESTON
IN MOSCOW

RANSOM demands have been made for Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Zhirinovskiy — two of Russia's best-loved television puppets who have been abducted.

Three characters from the popular television series *Kukly* (Dolls) — Russia's equivalent of *Spitting Image* — went missing two weeks ago from a Moscow studio warehouse. Being held are Mr Yeltsin, the Russian President, Mr Zhirinovskiy, the ultra-nationalist leader, and Aleksandr Livshits, who was Finance Minister. Each cost the equivalent of £4,000 to make.

"We got a call a few days after the dolls went missing," said a programme source. "A man's voice told us that if we wanted to see them again we could buy them back. The situation is very delicate, I cannot say any more."

While Mr Livshits, recently sacked in a government shake-up, is not a central figure, Mr Zhirinovskiy features regularly in the series and Mr Yeltsin is the star.

Since taking to the air in 1994 on NTV, Russia's independent television channel, *Kukly*'s sophisticated and irreverent satire of the country's political elite has been a huge hit. But the programme has also attracted unwanted attention, including a threatened prosecution by the Russian Prosecutor-General which collapsed amid widespread ridicule.

However, resourceful criminals could be harder to beat. *Kukly*'s makers refused to say whether the abductors had threatened to harm the puppets, but say they will negotiate. "We lost five puppets just after we started," said Vasilii Grigoriev, the producer. "We informed the police, but nothing happened. This time we are going to do things our own way."

Luckily for *Kukly*, the real Mr Yeltsin is holidaying at a Black Sea resort, so his character is not being missed.

Bomb raid plea to Chechnya

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW

ANATOLI KULIKOV, the Russian Interior Minister, yesterday accused the new leaders of Chechnya of sponsoring terrorism, after two bomb attacks at railway stations in southern Russia and a reported attack on a Russian border post.

General Kulikov appealed to President Maskhadov of Chechnya to "get rid of terrorists in his entourage" and spoke of a possible anti-Chechen backlash from the Russian population. "I would like to appeal to the people of Russia to comply strictly with the law, to help the law enforcement agencies and not to allow any lynching to happen," he said.

He was speaking after a

bomb explosion on Monday at a station in Pyatigorsk in Russia's North Caucasus region. Two people were killed and 17 injured.

General Kulikov confirmed reports that two Chechen women had been arrested on suspicion of planting the bomb. He said they were known to have taken part in the hostage-taking raid on the south Russian town of Budennovsk in June 1995, when more than 100 people were killed.

The commander of Russian forces in the North Caucasus reported that a police checkpoint on the border between Chechnya and Dagestan had come under attack on Monday from about 20 Chechen gunmen. A three-hour gun battle

had caused an unspecified number of casualties.

The Pyatigorsk bomb followed a similar blast at a railway station in the southern town of Armavir, which killed two people and injured eight. The authorities link the attacks with a threat by Salaman Raduyev, a renegade Chechen commander, to wage a war of terror to avenge the death of the rebel leader, Dzhokhar Dudayev, a year ago.

President Yeltsin warned the Chechen authorities of a sharp deterioration in relations if they did not crack down on terrorism. He ordered strict security measures in the region. The Chechen authorities deny involvement in the attacks.

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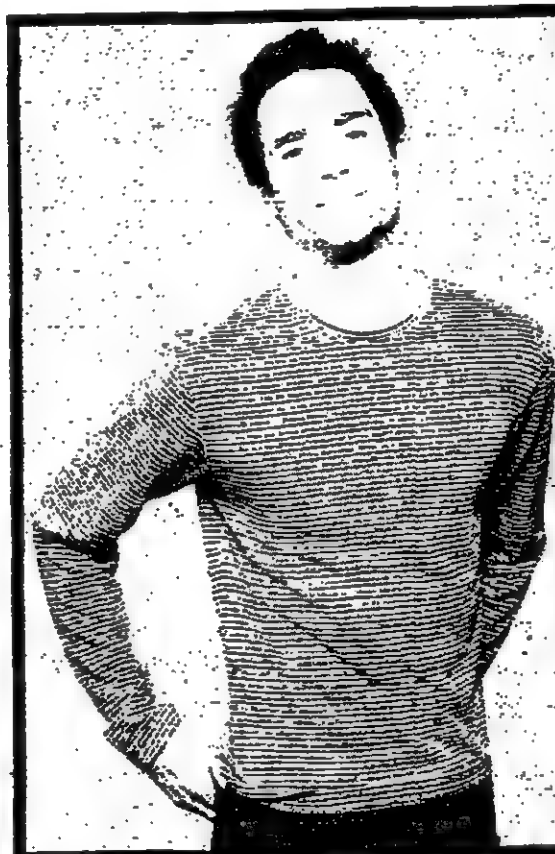
Stripes have moved from the sportsfield to the street. Style Editor Grace Bradberry picks four of the best

PHOTOGRAPHER: Karl Grant;
GROOMING: Pascal Marin;
MODEL: Fil Hanley;
STYLIST: Deborah Brett

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I lost an old friend the other day. It was a blue-and-white striped T-shirt of undistinguished provenance, but for five years it had been my favourite bit of clothing: the first thing I packed when going away, an infallible standby on a Bad Clothes day. Washed and washed again, it came up crisp and nautical, with an easy chic belying its plebeian origins, until quite suddenly, little holes began to appear all over it.

Soon they joined up into big holes, and I had to admit that it was no longer wearable. As I consigned it to the duster drawer, I was surprised by my feelings of gloom. It felt like taking some much-loved old pet to be put down.

A couple of days later, fishing it out to polish the piano, it struck me that, in its lacy decrepitude, my T-shirt was a dead ringer for the repulsive security blanket from which my son was once inseparable — and that a security blanket was exactly what it had been for me.

Every wardrobe needs security blankets. Not nasty velour leisurewear in which to slob out, but generous clothes of forgiving cut and undemanding elegance, which one can slide into, knowing that they will give one a lift on a day when one is beset by that panicky feeling that one hasn't a thing to put on.

Security blankets tend to be soft, both in texture and structure — fluid, rather than tailored, made of jersey, cashmere, silk or mohair. In muted colours guaranteed not to be harsh on the complexion. For decades, the queen of SB designers was the late Jean



'Brits are the real experts at the art of comfort clothes'

Muir, whose sinuous, drooping confections of crepe and jersey looked like nothing at all on the hanger, but once on the person had the fairy godmother-like ability, or so it was claimed by such devotees as Joanna Lumley, Lady Thatcher and Dame Maggie Smith, to bestow verve, chic, elegance and self-confidence on any woman who might find herself temporarily low on these qualities.

On the other side of the Atlantic, entire fashion houses have prospered on the trend for clothing to cocoon the neurosis of modern living. With her easy, sculptural shapes and perennial taste for drape and wrap rather than nip and tuck, Donna Karan's whole outfit could be seen as one vast security blanket.

Still, it is Brits who remain the real experts at the art of wearing comfort clothes — perhaps because the very notion corresponds so closely to our national belief that there is something, well, not quite nice about Getting All Dressed Up.

Open any copy of *Paris Match*, and you can be certain to find Isabelle Adjani, Juliette Binoche or Carole Bouquet unveiling the innermost secrets of their hearts, while carefully nurturing the image of a star. Their photographs are immaculate — coiffée,

maquillée and dressed in something instantly identifiable as bearing the name of a major couturier.

The equivalent encounter with their British counterparts is a very different matter. "She was huddled in a huge sweater, her face bare of make-up," the interviewer will invariably write. But as worn by those queens of Bohemian chic, Emma Thompson, Helena Bonham Carter, Miranda Richardson et al, that huge sweater carries a subtlety as complicated as the structuralist texts they all mastered at university. I dress like this because I am a strong, serious woman, it says. Furthermore, I may look as though I have just carried out a raid on Oxford, but in fact this sweater cost £299 at Joseph.

Now, the desire to spend a month's housekeeping on a sweater that looks as though it has already been thoroughly broken in by an ancient farm labourer may seem perverse — it certainly infuriates men. But to anyone who understands the concept of a security blanket, it makes perfect sense. I had one myself, from John Rocha — a knee-length mohair confection in an attractive shade of midweek. I wore it every day for six months, and it rapidly became an object of devotion among my colleagues. My sister, though, got it at once. "That isn't a jumper," she said, on first seeing it. "It's a house."

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The Spice Girls may be the stuff of little girls' fantasy, but their message needs to be challenged

Everyone goes on about the rudeness of contemporary society and the young, the decline of manners and the cult of coarseness, but it is indubitably the case that the real message behind popular culture is Do Not Offend.

Given all that talk about Girl Power, you'd think that now the Spice Girls have been attacked for performing the haka war dance on the grounds that this is a sacred ritual, and that only men are allowed to do it, they would at least put forward a political defence, even a phoney one. I do see that claiming it as a step forward for feminism, or a triumph for the sisterhood, might be going a bit. But I'm not sure that coming over all breathy and tearful is quite what we need either.

But we are all required to be tolerant of intolerance these days and if a Maori is offended then there is evidently no explanation or exhortation — such as lighten up — that will suffice. Maybe it's because when I was the age of the average Spice Girl, punk was the dominant discordant note of pop culture, but it does seem

quoting Marcel Proust, oddly, on the subject. (Though who am I to talk, unsettled as I am to find myself writing about them now?) But the thing about phenomena is that they are fleeting. And they are not quite believable.

Actually, I do believe that people are genuinely keen on them — if they're short enough. I have evidence of this. If I walk my three-year-old daughter (who affects a *de haut en bas* interest) to nursery, I have to fight my way through a playground full of would-be Spice Girls working out their dance routines.

As part from little girls (and the Paul Johnson contingent), who has any time for them at all? Have you ever met such a person? I am prepared to believe that there are those out of teeniform bras who buy their records, just as I am prepared to believe there are people who own a Teasmoid. But in both cases, they are the stuff of cliché.

The reason that is given for the Spice Girls' mass popularity is the reason they do not, in fact, enjoy, among even young adults, mass popularity. It is their ordinariness that is meant to seduce: we are all meant to identify. And look, how clever! We can pick our girl — posh spice, sporty spice and so on. Roland Barthes couldn't have done it better if he'd set up the group himself. But the difficulty with seeming to present the ordinary girl is that which ordinary girl wants to be ordinary?

The point about stage icons is that they are not ordinary: or even if they are, they are not meant to seem so. This, though, is the modern dilemma about fame.

To be famous is to be special, but to be special is to be envied. Everyone wants to be a regular guy (and I use the term to denote the female, too), and to be famous for being just a regular guy is therefore supremely desirable. But to be special and ordinary at the same time is confusing — and confusing, because there is an essential contradiction that, in the end, even the dimmest fan can fathom. The only way to apologise for one's fame is to protest how little it is justified.

Naturally, sometimes those protesting have a point, but that is only part of the story. The dominating neurosis of the day (and one peculiarly exhibited by the modern campaigning politician, on a psychological though perhaps not pathological hiding to nothing) is the frenzied desire to please, to be impossibly acceptable to the varied multitude.

In these terms, the Spice Girls are a flattering enough concept, though the plodding literalness of the construct is amusing in the same way the completely bafflingly po-faced literalness of choreography of the sadly defunct Pan's People



Innocent, frolicsome girliness — or propaganda with a pernicious sexual message? Nigella Lawson believes there are dangers and contradictions in the posturings of the Spice Girls



Nigella Lawson

strange to me that the most successful group of the moment has one aim: to seem nice.

But then again, the Spice Girls are also described as "professional". And the term is thus used as a commendation. What is the world coming to when a pop group is meant to behave like a cluster of suburban office workers going up West clubbing for the night?

I have noticed that fellow performers — and most recently George Michael, as he discussed the setting up of his own record label — don't refer to the Spice Girls as musicians, or even performers, particularly, but as a "phenomenon".

I have no strong feelings one way or another about them, but it is surely the point that to be a real fan you need to be under 14 or over 65. The rest of us can hardly be blamed for failing to see the charms of these *jeunes filles en fleur*, to quote a besotted Paul Johnson

was. Now there, while we're on the subject, was a girl-group with which one would want to identify. The stereotyping — the blonde, the brunette and so forth — was no less crude than that of the Spice Girls, but the actual personifications of these types were more desirable.

Little girls aspire to be big girls, and so for them the Spice Girls are the stuff of fantasy. But for women the same age, the Spice Girls are hardly aspirational figures. The PR reckoning behind this counsels on everyone, therefore, not begrudging their fame, but rather it works in reverse: everyone resents it. Why then?

If there is an implicit double standard in the modern cult of celebrity and the contemporaneous championing of the ordinary, there is another, essentially more pernicious, contradiction in the presentation of sexuality. The postulations of Girl Power, the bosom-bulging basques and pelvis-thrusting, are ostensibly all about empowered, aggressive sexuality. But in fact what is being presented is that whiney, look-don't-touch form of self-absorbed titillation. In other words, they embody the dangerous belief that it is acceptable to appear sexually available, but unacceptable to be treated as sexually available. And please, don't write in to tell me that just because someone shows her cleavage she doesn't deserve to be molested. That goes without saying — but the sanctimonious packaging of female sexuality is all the same irksome, and more dangerous.

For some reason parents of pre-teen girls who copy such posturings go along with all this, wrongly seeing in it an innocent frolicsome girliness. This is the cream bun school of bottom wiggling: naughty but nice. That's how the Spice Girls have been happy to present themselves, too. They must not know what's hit them now someone's taken them seriously — even if it is some disgruntled Maori leader unacquainted with their oeuvre.

The man with the real lead in the polls

How can the opinion polls be so certain? I've never met anyone who was questioned by a pollster.

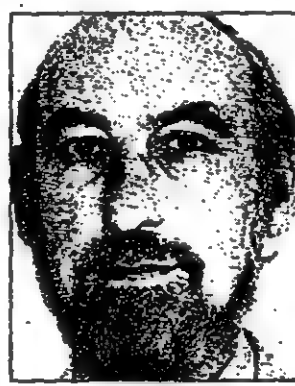
This is the sort of remark commonly heard at general election time. It is a view found among the droves of letters that the Editor of *The Times* is now receiving about the campaign.

Not only is extreme scepticism expressed about basing national projections on the opinions of so few, but many people seem to delight when the opinion polls, or some of them, end up with egg on their faces, as in 1992 and 1970. If, tomorrow, the first news from the real polls shows that the canvassers were wrong, there will surely be some cheers, and not just from Tories.

Some doubters scarcely believe that the polled sample exists. Doubt not. In the past few months I have been tackled three times by the pollsters. Not long before John Major named the day, I was strolling in my Surrey suburb late one Friday morning when a woman looking for directions called to me from a parked car. It turned out that she was in the street she wanted. She explained that she worked for MORI (*The Times*'s choice of pollster, headed by the redoubtable Robert Worcester) and this would be attempting to interview 16 people, of different "types", living in some ten named local streets.

It emerged that my house was in a street that had been picked and I readily agreed to be her first victim. I was going to be out for most of the rest of the day, so we conducted the canvass in her car.

Although she started with political questions, including the one we all know and love — "If there were a general election tomorrow, which party would you support?" — most of the survey was probably for commercial purposes.



Interviewee Ivan Barnes

There were two themes, the first concerning mostly large, well-known companies. Questions were along the lines of "How much do you know about the operations of/about eight companies listed?" "Is it your perception that each company is — very efficient; efficient; inefficient; very inefficient?"

I found that I was spending

'I began to see myself as a don't know, or even a don't care'

half my time trying conscientiously to answer the questions and the other half trying to imagine what the purpose of all this could be. The pollster did not rush me but the questioning moved ahead quite briskly and, distracted as I was by my own speculations, I felt sure at one point that I had claimed "a little" knowledge of a company that did not exist. (Had the devious MORI backroom persons put in a booby trap? I imagined them chuckling over my

The Letters Editor of *The Times*, Ivan Barnes, wonders why he has been approached by the pollsters three times

answers and throwing them in the waste paper basket.)

My conclusion was that one of the companies was worried about its public image but wanted MORI to make sure that things were sufficiently bad before it decided how to set about repairing the damage. I felt quietly confident that I had spotted the "guilty" party.

Similarly, there were a number of questions about South American countries. These (the questions, not the countries) were rather boring and seemed completely disconnected. I began to see myself as a don't know, or possibly a don't care. Although this was more difficult, I was fairly confident that I could spot the client country/tourist office involved. Again, I took this to be part of a name-recognition or image-building exercise.

But who knows? Bob Worcester's merry crew have doubtless filled the process with false trails, if not false companies, to lead the curious astray. The pollster was discretion itself. Whenever I asked questions of my own, she politely but firmly took us straight back to the MORI matter in hand. The whole thing took just over half an hour. It was all most enjoyable and we parted almost like old friends.

My second encounter with MORI was shortly before Easter. I had just moved to a house in Southwark, not far from London Bridge. As I was struggling with my key and an armful of books on the doorstep, I was approached by a polite, middle-aged man who wanted to canvass me.

Wonderful. With the election campaign well under way, here was my chance to

on leaving the Army Museum in Chelsea, I was stopped (by MORI, of course) to provide information about my museum-going habits and my interest in individual military campaigns. This was interesting but it could hardly make up for being left out of the general election campaign.

The question remains as to why MORI keeps picking on me. One of my daughters says there must be a shortage of stooped, grumpy, balding 55 to 65-year-olds and that MORI pollsters have difficulty meeting their norm. I put it down to personal magnetism and charm. Or is Bob Worcester having me followed?

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INVISIBLE ELECTION

The other ballot that is taking place tomorrow

Whatever else may be the legacy of the Conservatives 18-year tenure, few would be satisfied with the state of local government. The combination of a Treasury intent on absolute command of public spending and Margaret Thatcher's determination to deal with certain hard-left Labour administrations has left local democracy in a sorry condition. The sledgehammer of Whitehall control may have cracked some pseudo-Marxist nuts but has unhinged the balance between centre and periphery in the process.

Tomorrow most English voters will receive two ballot papers at their polling station. They could be forgiven for expressing surprise. The fate of 3,213 council seats will be contested. In most places this election will be fought on radically redrawn boundaries. Many councils have been reorganised: urban areas such as Derby, Leicester, and Southampton have been separated from the rest of their counties. As of 1998 they will become independent, unitary, authorities. The remaining rural and suburban components will continue much as before. This will also be news to much of the electorate.

National politicians determined that local boundaries needed modification. In Scotland and Wales, Whitehall decided that a single tier of government was the optimal solution. In England a different strategy was adopted. A local government commission emerged with the mission of consultation and then recommendation. The Government had thought that its creature would support the widespread introduction of unitary authorities here as well. To the irritation of all concerned at the Department of the Environment, opinion at the grassroots was actually solicited and sometimes accepted. The final outcome was a complex mixture of alternative systems. That mosaic encounters the electorate tomorrow.

This has been the third time in 25 years that a Conservative Prime Minister has accepted responsibility for the structure of local government. Edward Heath destroyed

a century of tradition, abolished historic counties and moved around their borders, in pursuit of the "perfect" size of local unit. Margaret Thatcher dismissed the Greater London Council and the metropolitan counties because she did not care for the likes of Ken Livingstone. Now John Major has had his turn. Some of the new inventions will be more popular than their predecessors. Others will be alien to their residents. All the new authorities will raise barely 20 per cent of their own revenues. Even then, those councils will face numerous restrictions on how such money is spent.

A campaign conducted on boundaries largely chosen elsewhere, for the right to distribute funds on a formula largely designed elsewhere, was always unlikely to inspire mass attention. In recent local elections turnout has fallen below 40 per cent. With a general election this year, participation will be higher but profile even lower. Tomorrow's council contests have been rendered invisible. Despite the fact that practical decisions on crime, education, and social services must be taken by local politicians, the national parties have had no qualms about co-opting all three areas as private fiefdoms. It is assumed that to the victor goes the spoils of local democracy.

The Conservatives may now suffer for their own attitude. The devaluation of local government has dried up a source of party activists. The Tories have been hammered in four consecutive council elections. They will not field candidates in 10 per cent of all seats tomorrow: 16 per cent in the new unitary authorities. Labour will be represented in 97 per cent of cases. That badly diminished manpower and eroded local base may prove critical for parliamentary contenders. This alone should prompt them to reconsider their centralist instincts. If the Conservatives are evicted from office this week they will doubtless move swiftly to the leadership question. They would do well to consider the local democracy issue with equal intensity.

LICENCE TO MURDER

The EU shows its tolerance of Iranian terror

The European Union is to send its ambassadors back to Tehran barely a month after they were withdrawn in disgust at Iran's officially sanctioned murder of dissident Kurdish exiles in Berlin. At the same time the EU announced yesterday the formal suspension of its "critical dialogue" with Tehran, the expulsion of any remaining Iranian intelligence agents in Europe and an end to ministerial visits to and from Tehran. These pusillanimous measures include nothing about trade, make no demands that Iran drop the fatwa against Salman Rushdie. They are, as the International Rushdie Defence Committee declared, not even a slap on the wrist; they send a message that Iran can get away with murder in Europe.

The Government argues that returning the ambassadors to Iran does not necessarily imply a softening of the EU position. Envoys, it is said, can convey a sharper message, with greater authority, than their deputies. It is in Europe's interest that Iran should be left in no doubt about European anger at its underground war against exiles and support of terrorists. It is also important that all Europe's ambassadors act together, especially in the run-up to Iranian elections when voters should know how Europe views their Government. Greece, ever ready to take advantage when a question of principle is at stake, did not even withdraw its ambassador, while Britain did so years ago in protest at the fatwa and Iran's mistreatment of a British diplomat. The worst sign of European disunity would be for the envoys

to go back in dribs and drabs, with Iran wooing each country in turn and being rewarded with an ambassador's return.

Britain also argues that the EU measures go further than several countries wanted. France was known to be unhappy with the blanket ban on ministerial visits, and to allow senior trade officials to visit Iran. The French attempt to take advantage of the Iranian market is all too obvious, and several other countries opposed the tough line proposed by Britain and Germany. If a common EU foreign policy is to have any meaning, it must indeed be commonly agreed and observed. The new sanctions may be little more than inconvenient to Iran; but if fully observed by all 15, they do, nevertheless, send a message.

As so often, however, principle appears to have given way to national advantage. No European country supports trade sanctions against Iran because none trusts its neighbour to observe them. And with much of Europe still suffering unemployment and recession, it is all too clear that such fears are justified. This has bedevilled all attempts by the United States to formulate a co-ordinated Western response to Tehran's rogue regime. Yesterday's sanctions say nothing of Iranian compensation to the families killed, do little to clamp down on Iranian travelling abroad to stir up trouble, and have no real teeth to deter terrorism. Despite the Berlin judgment, Washington has far to go to convince Europe that Iran is still a threat to Western democracy.

CANADA HIGH

One Prime Minister facing a brighter future

The snap election that the Prime Minister, Jean Chrétien, has called in Canada on June 2, 17 months before it is due, is likely to see the ruling Liberals swept back to power with his own authority enhanced. After years in the doldrums, the economy is booming, foreign investment is healthy and a generous budget has boosted the feel-good factor. The Opposition is weak and divided. Canada's international prestige, enhanced by its readiness to lead a multinational force to Zaire, is high. Most importantly, some of the fratricidal bitterness over Quebec separatism has begun to ebb as the province focuses on reviving its economy.

Mr Chrétien is, nevertheless, unlikely to achieve the landslide he won at the 1993 general election when the ruling Conservatives lost all but two of their seats, including that of Kim Campbell, the Prime Minister. The Tories' devastation was so complete that the party was forced to rebuild its policies, structures and morale. Bolstered by a strong performance in some provinces, especially Ontario, and under new leadership, they are now running at about 18 per cent in the polls. The two main opposition parties now represented in Parliament, the Bloc Québécois and Reform Party, are both regional, strong in the West and in Quebec respectively but representing sectional interests and unlikely to extend their vote.

The Liberals cannot afford complacency. Six months ago their popularity rating was 67 per cent; now it is around 48 per cent. The main reason is that unemployment remains stubbornly high at 9 per cent and few can

say that they are better off now than in 1993. Canadians are demanding: polls show that they trust their Government more than any other developed country, and appear naively bruised if it does not deliver what it promised. Since coming to power Mr Chrétien has backtracked on several campaign pledges and stolen many of the Tories' clothes — a tactic familiar in Europe but one that Canadians still regard as dishonourable.

Canada also has difficulty in recognising its own achievements. The twin burdens of constant comparison with the American giant next door and the need to readjust formerly unequal relations between anglophones and francophones have overshadowed any pride in the country's Scandinavian-style society. The continuing uncertainty over Quebec has inhibited all Ottawa's attempts to foster a sense of nationhood and has paralysed much of the Federal Government's normal business.

On this divisive issue, however, Mr Chrétien can claim success. Shaken by the near victory of the independence referendum, the Federal Government has stepped up the pace of devolution and embarked on an energetic campaign to persuade Quebec that as a "distinct society" it has more to gain within Canada than outside. This will not satisfy many francophones, and the abrasive West would happily cast the province adrift. But for the first time in a generation, the election will not be about Canada's Constitution or its possible break-up. That is, in itself, a measure of Mr Chrétien's achievement.

Labour funding for cancer care

From Professor D. J. Kerr

Sir, Dr Sandy Macara, Chairman of the British Medical Association, is surely wrong to deride Labour's pledge to spend £100 million in reducing NHS waiting lists (report, April 18). If this involvement was scattered across the NHS I would agree that it would be lost without trace; but Labour plans to focus on cancer services.

A poll recently undertaken by Birmingham Health Authority of residents in its area, one of the largest in the UK, demonstrated that cancer, still a stigmatised illness, is the number-one health priority for every age group of those polled. It is also well recognised that there are large variations in cancer survival, depending upon where you live, and consequently in the delivery of cancer services.

An NHS fragmented into a series of warring city-states, so-called trusts, militates against the possibility of promoting the sort of seamless, quality care to take us out of the lower divisions of Europe's cancer survival league.

Labour will promote a hub-and-spoke model, linking cancer centres and units in district general hospitals, ensuring inter-trust collaboration and improving the homogeneity of cancer care by multidisciplinary teams of health professionals. The party has made a commitment of new, earmarked funds which will be devoted to the regions to help pump-prime this process.

Ten million pounds, to be added to an existing allocation of £30 million, spent on the diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer, will not immediately solve the problem. However, those of us charged regionally and nationally with the task of implementing improved delivery of cancer care welcome this focused and strategic investment in the nation's health.

The hub-and-spoke model could be a paradigm for improving other aspects of healthcare and an important step towards rationalising the NHS.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID KERR
(Clinical Director),
CRC Institute for Cancer Studies,
University of Birmingham,
Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT,
April 22.

Election 97

From Lord Rix, Chairman of Mencap

Sir, Matthew Parris, writing on sectors of society which have not been considered throughout the election campaign ("People in search of a party", April 23) singles out "the poor and the public sector". I would add disabled people.

At least 1.2 million people have learning disabilities and a further 4.8 million have disabilities of other kinds. With so many marginal seats it is worth reminding the politicians that these seats could be swung by the thousands of votes of disabled people and their families.

The Disability Discrimination Act, introduced last December, was intended as a move towards civil rights, as the Community Care Act was towards good community care. Instead there seems to be a steady erosion in rights for people with disabilities, with legislation which has seemed positive being negatively interpreted.

Candidates who offer to make the hope of wholehearted community care a reality could be amazed at their support on Thursday.

Yours etc,
BRIAN RIX,
Chairman, Mencap,
Mencap National Centre,
123 Golden Lane, EC1,
April 25.

From Mr Neil Moore

Sir, You published a letter from a group of former Tories who have defected to the Liberal Democrats (April 28). I write as a lifelong Liberal who is moving the other way and expects to vote Conservative for the first time ever on May 1.

I shall be voting for John Major, not for the fractious, squabbling party that has let him down. He has presided over the healthiest UK economy that I can remember. He is pragmatically but not neurotically Eurosceptic. Perhaps, above all, he stands for a principle — the individual's freedom of choice — which too many Liberal Democrats seem to have forgotten, not least in education.

I believe that Mr Major has fought an honest campaign and offers the best chance of preserving traditional liberal values.

Yours etc,
NEIL MOORE,
26 Lower Castle Road,
St Mawes, Cornwall,
April 29.

From Mr Denis Christian

Sir, When two of the three major players in an election are purveying a similar product, is it not rather silly to describe the third option as a "wasted vote"?

Yours faithfully,
DENIS CHRISTIAN,
2 Chichester Place,
Kemp Town,
Brighton, East Sussex,
April 28.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Tactical voting for Eurosceptics

From the Chairman of the European Movement — United Kingdom

Sir, You urge readers, in effect, to vote against supporters of the European Movement in the general election ("The good Eurosceptic's guide to making the most of a tactical vote", April 28, later editions; leading article, April 29). May I respond by saying that the backing courageously given to the European Movement by colleagues in all parties is motivated by a desire to see a strong Britain leading a strong Europe. Contrary to fears stirred up by Eurosceptics, Britain's independence is not at stake. However, our prosperity and influence would be at risk should we become semi-detached from Europe.

This threat has come about because people have wallowed in anti-EU rhetoric instead of looking at the reality of what EU membership means — access to the world's largest single market, 3.5 million jobs linked to exports to the EU, inward investment which companies like Toyota and Siemens have clearly indicated to be in jeopardy if Britain turns its back on Europe.

In the early 1980s, I stayed in the Labour Party, opposed extremism and fought for a sensible policy on Europe until common sense prevailed. In the same spirit, I shall remain a Times reader.

Yours sincerely,
GILES RADICE,
Chairman, European Movement — United Kingdom,
Dean Bradley House,
52 Horseferry Road, SW1,
April 29.

From Mr Michael Hutchings

Sir, Unlike the jingoistic minority who want nothing of Europe in any form, vast numbers of us desperately want the UK to get back to playing its full part in the EU as soon as possible. We have already lost ground at the negotiating table because the Government has been distracted by party squabbling. Most of the people I meet in the rest of Europe do not revel in our disarray; they still want our full involvement.

The EU needs to be strong and unified in order to ensure that we continue to live in the relatively peaceful and prosperous society that we have enjoyed during the 24 years of our membership. That seems to me a more concrete definition of sovereignty than the colour of my passport.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL HUTCHINGS
(Consultant on EU law),
76 Manville Road, SW17,
April 29.

The Norway fallacy

From Dr Neville March Hunnings

Sir, The example of Norway is continually paraded before us (for example, letter, April 23) as a *modus vivendi* which would allow us to have our European cake and eat it. It is false.

Norway is not outside the Common Market; it is an integral part of it. It is subject to all the rules in the EC Treaty and its directives and regulations on the manufacture and trade in goods and services, on the immigration of workers and the self-employed, on transport, employment, consumer protection, the environment, etc (except, notably, agriculture and fisheries). Its companies must obey the EC competition rules, which are actively enforced. Its courts are bound by the European Court in Luxembourg, either directly or through the preliminary rulings of the EFTA court, also in Luxembourg.

If the UK left the EU it might indeed be able to join Norway in the European Economic Area (EEA). But in such a case it would, like Norway, still be bound by most of the rules and constraints (and reciprocal benefits) to which the Eurosceptics object. In return, we would be excluded from the

From Dr David Fleming

Sir, The trouble with the Europe debate is that the labels have somehow got switched onto the wrong bottles. Multiple currencies stand for a healthy economic system whose members can expect to trade with each other indefinitely. Single currency means lack of flexibility which, in economics as in engineering and personal relationships, will lead to collapse.

Anyone who is "pro-Europe" should therefore argue against a single currency. It is precisely because Europe matters so much that there must be that flexibility. It is tragic to see the people who are opposed to a single currency being described as "antis"; it is they who are the real Europeans.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID FLEMING,
104 South Hill Park,
Hampstead, NW3,
April 29.

From Mr Julian Williams

Sir, Mr Major had his opportunity to "save the union" (report, April 29), instead he chose integration into a federal Europe.

Since 1992 he has bludgeoned the Maastricht treaty through Parliament and handed over much of the UK's shared democratic heritage to an unelected and unaccountable bureaucracy in another country.

He should not complain that many Scots now want their own regional forum (independence is a misnomer) with direct access to the halls and backrooms of Brussels. After all this is where laws governing Scotland are now made, where Westminster's power is regularly overruled and where the UK's wealth increasingly goes to be redistributed.

Yours sincerely,
JULIAN WILLIAMS,
95 Hornsey Lane, NW,
April 29.

From Mr P. P. Gardner

Sir, By urging voters to support Eurosceptic candidates of the bigger parties you will only contribute to the continuation of their sell-out policies. Far better a million votes for the UKIP and the Referendum Party, even if no seats are won.

The only way to really scare a politician is to take his votes.

Yours faithfully,
PETER GARDNER
(Parliamentary Candidate for Oxford East, UK Independence Party),
78 St Marys Road, Oxford,
April 29.

EU's political negotiating processes, play no part in the drafting and adoption of new EU laws (which would nevertheless become binding on us, as they are on Norway) and, perhaps more importantly, be expelled from our inside seat (on the K-4 Committee) in the European fight against organised crime, etc.

The Norwegian EEA path is not an attractive one for Britain. The Swiss path may be more attractive but is not available. Throughout the EU the most virulent political swearword is and always has been "free trade area", usually preceded by the word "mere". It is inconceivable that anyone in the EU would ever accept any UK free trade access outside the EEA, i.e. without the UK being legally bound by the EU's decision-making.

If we wish to extricate ourselves from the law of the European Union, the only way is by complete withdrawal. We could then try to use our diplomatic muscle (if any); but we would be in the same position as Brazil or India or Australia or Canada. There is no middle way.

Yours faithfully,
NEVILLE MARCH HUNNINGS
(Editor, Common Market Law Reports, 1964-94),
11 Russell Hill, Purley, Surrey.

GBS's classics

From Mr John Coleby

Sir, Sir Peter Hall (letter, April 21) and Barbara Smoker (April 24) criticise the actions of the Society of Authors as literary agent for the Shaw estate. The society is duty bound to follow the instructions of the trustees of the estate and its main beneficiaries; it can advise on but not decide matters it then has to negotiate.

It is easy but unfair to blame the agent for the decisions of a principal. In 1932, writing in the society's journal, *The Author*, Shaw himself stated that it was safer to leave off one's breastplate than one's backplate when battling for authors' rights.

After all it is possible for the impresario, Duncan Weldon, to subvert rights which he holds in a particular play, and which if all parties agree, could be a nice little earner for him in the bargain.

The National Theatre in Sir Peter's day still owned the English stage rights in *Gyps and Dolls*, as Lord Olivier had long had a yen to appear as Nathan Detroit. It was left to Sir Richard Eyre to rescue that classic in 1982, for the benefit of us all.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN COLEBY
(Clerk, Society of Authors, 1970-76;
Rights Manager, National Theatre,
1976-80),
The Cedars,
Crandall, Farnham, Surrey,
April 24.

No consensus on drink law reform

From Honorary Alderman Simon Cockedge

Sir, The Chairman of the Campaign for Real Ale (Cama) and others state that "the time has come for a new liquor licensing Act" (letter, April 23) but they should ask our politicians to justify why there should be any licensing legislation at all.

What role does the State play in telling us where we may buy or drink alcohol? Surely the market and the individual's wishes are a better regulator of the provision and consumption of alcohol than any legislation.

Yours sincerely,
SIMON COCKEDGE,
24 Amberley Gardens, Bedford.

From Mr George Thompson Brake

Sir, Few people who have studied the development of licensing legislation and its administration will agree that a new licensing Act is needed. The "permitted hours" brought in during the First World War have gone: the legal drinking age has been reduced from 21 to 18; children are now allowed on premises where provision is made for them; retailing of liquor is no longer confined to public houses and licensed clubs, nor are magistrates required to take account of "need" in considering applications for licences.

Apart from restrictions imposed by legislation, the licensed trade has made public houses more acceptable to families, providing restaurants and attractive menus. Increasing use of identity cards for young people has helped to discourage rowdy elements.

In my experience it is not true to say "the police and magistrates support reform"; if by that is meant further relaxation, Police opposition to granting further licences in vulnerable areas indicates their concern for public order.

Some of the recommendations in the early Seventies by the Erroll committee on licensing and also by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission would have created a free for all. Is this what Cama and others are advocating?

Yours faithfully,
G. THOMPSON BRAKE
(Co-author, *Drink in Great Britain*, 1900 to 1979, Edsall, 1980),
43 Florence Gardens,
Hadleigh, Benfleet, Essex,
April 25.

Safety in numbers

From Mr P. S. H. Lawrence

Sir, The three women in a boat shown in your 1895 photograph (report, "One vote prevents male dons joining all-woman college", April 24) were only playing for safety.

My copy of the *Memorandum on the conduct & discipline of junior members of the University*, Oxford 1932, rules that Men and Women Undergraduates may not go on the river or for motor rides together, unless each Woman Undergraduate has previously obtained leave from the Principal of her College and there are at least two women in the party.

Yours faithfully,
PETER LAWRENCE,
Simeons, Little Milton, Oxford,
April 24.

Victory anthem?

From the Organist of Hereford Cathedral

Sir, I am glad that the music for Evensong on election day is coming along so nicely (letters, April 22, 23, 24 and 25) but I fear I cannot find much in the daily psalms to encourage either Mr Major or Mr Blair. On the contrary, the psalmist on the seventh evening of the month is quite specific: "but the righteous is merciful and liberal" (Psalm xxxvii, 21).

Yours faithfully,
ROY MASSEY,
1 College Cloisters,
Cathedral Close, Hereford,
April 28.

From Mr Hugh Stephenson

Sir, Many years ago, when I was at school, the general election day hymn chosen for morning assembly was *Hymns Ancient & Modern* number 738 — *Come, labour on!* The headmaster was thought to have had radical leanings.

The Conservatives won the election on that occasion. So much for dedicated heath. Perhaps someone thought His name was being taken in vain?

Yours sincerely,
HUGH STEPHENSON,
7 Westbury Avenue,
Claygate, Esher, Surrey,
April 28.

From Mr A. Osbaldiston

Sir, A clergyman, when asked which party he was going to vote for, replied that a man in his position could not declare his politics.

However, he added, if the Tories win the opening hymn on Sunday will be *Now thank we all our God: if Labour wins, O God our help in ages past and now, should the Liberal Democrats win, then it will be God moves in a mysterious way*.

Yours sincerely,
A. OSBALDISTON,
Kinder, Pinkham Lane,
Clebury Mortimer, Worcestershire,
April 29.

OBITUARIES

LORD TAYLOR OF GOSFORTH

Lord Taylor of Gosforth, Lord Chief Justice of England, 1992-96, died from cancer on April 28 aged 66. He was born on May 1, 1930.

Although ill-health forced him to retire early, in his four short years as Lord Chief Justice, Lord Taylor of Gosforth redefined the role of England's most senior full-time judge and changed fundamentally the public perception of the judiciary. Taking on responsibility for the criminal justice system at a time of crisis, he did much to help to restore public confidence. Yet he will probably be remembered as much for his battles with Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, over criminal justice policy as he will for his contributions to the criminal law.

Until Lord Taylor's appointment in 1992, senior judges took the view that they had to make the best of whatever legislation Parliament served up, however half-baked it might turn out to be. But the new Lord Chief Justice believed he should try to get the recipe changed while there was still time. If a quiet word with the chief did not do the trick, he was never shy of letting everyone in the restaurant know what he thought of the fare on offer.

Peter Murray Taylor was born in Newcastle upon Tyne and educated there at the Royal Grammar School. His father was a doctor; his grandfather worked as a tailor. That, at least according to family legend, was why the immigration officer put his grandfather's name down as Taylor when he came off the boat from Vilna: the family name had originally been Teiger.

The youthful Peter Taylor first got to know his wife Irene during the war, when they were both evacuated as children to Cumbria. They were married in 1950, and had three daughters and a son. The couple were a year short of their fortieth wedding anniversary when Irene Taylor died in 1995, also of cancer. It was a loss which affected him deeply.

Taylor was the second Jew to become Lord Chief Justice of England: the first was Rufus Isaacs, later Marquess of Reading. While making no claims to be religiously observant, Taylor believed his Jewish background made him more sympathetic to the needs of minorities in society. He knew what it was like to be on the receiving end of prejudice. During a keynote speech on racial discrimination in 1992, the legal profession, he related a personal incident from his days as a QC on the North Eastern Circuit. He had been involved, he said, with an Indian client who requested an Indian barrister. That barrister, realising he would be partnering Peter Taylor, said he was not prepared to work with a Jew.

Taylor had also seen poverty at close quarters: as a wartime evacuee he lived in a house with no bathroom and no electricity. In 1992, when he became Lord Chief Justice, he said he thought he had

been appointed because he was not considered to be wholly out of touch — he felt he was in the mainstream of the life of the nation.

Taylor made that remark at a news conference called to mark his appointment, the first time a judge had agreed to face the media in this way. He initially promised to hold news conferences every six months but soon thought better of it: despite his popular image, he never really understood the media and had little patience with journalists. He, no doubt, felt his worst feelings about the press were vindicated by the decision of a national newspaper in May 1996 to run a story about his impending retirement a few hours before Downing Street had intended to reveal that he was suffering from cancer (the announcement was brought forward as a result). But Taylor nevertheless did not hesitate to use press publicity when he wanted to make an impact. His devastating last speech in the House of Lords, delivered in May 1996, was effectively "trailed" in an article he published that morning in *The Times*.

After reading history at Pembroke College, Cambridge, Taylor was called to the Bar in 1954. Basing himself in Newcastle, he became a formidable advocate: he took silk when he was only 36. By 1980 he had risen to the top of his profession, becoming an outstanding leader of the North Eastern Circuit and then chairman of the Bar Council. In 1974 he had prosecuted the corrupt property developer John Poulson, who was sent to prison for seven years. Colleagues remember his choice turn of phrase. Some, he memorably quipped in that trial, are born with greatcoats; some acquire them; and others have greatcoats thrust upon them.

But in another famous trial of that era he did not fare so well. In 1979 Taylor prosecuted the former leader of the Liberal Party, Jeremy Thorpe, on charges of conspiracy to murder and incitement to murder. Thorpe, defended by George Carman, was acquitted on both counts.

Taylor was involved in two other cases which he was later to regret, although there was no suggestion that he was responsible for what turned out to be grave miscarriages of justice. In 1976 Taylor prosecuted Stefan Kiszko for the brutal murder of an 11-year-old girl. The jury found him guilty and it was not until 1992 that evidence emerged which proved Kiszko could not have been the killer. That evidence was not disclosed to defence lawyers at the time of Kiszko's original trial, although nobody suggested that Taylor himself was ever told about it. Kiszko died within two years of being cleared by the Court of Appeal.

He was also one of the junior Crown counsel in the case of Judith Ward, convicted of murdering the 12 people who died in 1974 when the IRA left a bomb in a coach travelling on the M62 motorway. Ward was cleared by the Court of Appeal



In 1992 after the court found that three senior forensic scientists had withheld crucial evidence. Some of the lawyers responsible for the original prosecution were criticised by the appeal judges for not advising the scientists of their duty to disclose this evidence to the defence.

Taylor, who was by then Lord Chief Justice, had offered to give evidence at Judith Ward's appeal, but he was told he would not be needed — the declining of his offer ranked with him and he later publicly spoke of it.

Taylor was made a High Court judge in 1980 and promoted to the Court of Appeal in 1988. A year later he was appointed to chair the inquiry into the Hillsborough football stadium disaster. He was a good choice: he had captained Northumberland at rugby and was a keen supporter of Newcastle's rugby and football teams. His handling of the inquiry was sensitive and efficient and the report, which followed, vivid and well-received. It placed the blame on the police and the owners of the ground, not on the fans. Its principal recommendation was the introduction of all-seat stadiums, thus leading

the Government to abandon its initial inclination towards a football identity card system.

The humanity which earned him praise for the Hillsborough report was evident in other aspects of his life. Taylor was a man of broad talents. As well as playing rugby, he was a classical pianist of near-professional accomplishment. He said he performed only at charity concerts "so that if something goes wrong, nobody can demand their money back". He had links for many years with the Leeds International Piano Competition and performed with its chairman, Dame Fanny Waterman, in public — as well as playing with Tatyana Nikolayeva, the great Russian pianist, in private at the Judges' Lodgings in Leeds. In the lunch recess during the Poulson trial, he was known to relax by slipping off to play the piano. He also enjoyed playing in his own string trio at Christmas parties and at the Garrick Club.

Sir Peter Taylor — he became a life peer only upon his appointment — succeeded Lord Lane as Lord Chief Justice of England in 1992. At that time, as he fully

accepted, there was a crisis of confidence in the criminal justice system. The Birmingham Six had been freed on appeal a year earlier; before them, the Maguire family had been cleared; earlier still, it had been the turn of the Guildford Four. Taylor said he hoped these miscarriages of justice would change judicial attitudes. "I think judges will be a great deal more cautious in the way in which they direct juries on the facts," he said, "and I hope the police will be a great deal more cautious in how they go about their investigations."

An official acknowledgement that things had gone wrong was the first step to restoring public confidence in the system. When he retired in 1996, miscarriages of justice were not the concern they had been four years earlier, and Taylor is entitled to much of the credit.

He also did much to modernise the public's impression of the judiciary. Taylor said he wanted to overcome "the widely held belief that judges are out of touch or even, as has been said, 'live on another planet'". He gave the occasional newspaper interview and became the first judge to appear on the BBC's *Question Time*. It was not an experience he chose to repeat.

Taylor believed that judicial wigs created the wrong image, and he tried unsuccessfully to have them abolished. Moreover, in a speech shortly before his retirement, he said judges should no longer remain silent in the face of media criticism. On "suitable occasions," he said, "judges should be prepared to speak on matters affecting the law and the courts, to answer criticism and to explain policies". Not many of them took him at his word.

Taylor had a remarkable influence on government policy. He had regular meetings with the Home Secretary and also spoke to the Prime Minister from time to time. Michael Howard would probably not have gone ahead with his plan to allow juries to draw inferences from a defendant's silence — in the face of a recommendation from the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice — if Taylor had not supported him. On the other hand, Howard had little option but to reject the commission's proposals for restricting trial by jury once Taylor had come out against them.

The full scale of Taylor's influence could even turn out to be retrospective. In a speech he made to Scottish solicitors at Glenaeles in the spring of 1993, he attacked two provisions of the Criminal Justice Act, 1991, which, he declared, "defy common sense". The provisions restricted the power of judges to imprison offenders. Within six months Parliament had abolished these restrictions, together with the discredited system of unit fines.

But by 1995, with a change of Home Secretary, criminal justice policy had gone into reverse. This time, the new Home Secretary's complaint was that

judges were not using imprisonment enough. Indeed, Michael Howard told the Tory party conference that he wanted to introduce automatic life sentences for those convicted for a second time of some violent and sexual offences; he was also proposing stiffer sentences for persistent burglars and drug dealers. Within hours the Lord Chief Justice had begun a campaign of attack. It was to culminate in an extraordinary debate he initiated in the House of Lords in May 1996. "Never in the history of our criminal law have such far-reaching proposals been put forward on the strength of such flimsy evidence," he told a packed Lords' chamber. "Quite simply, minimum sentences must involve a denial of justice." Michael Howard appeared unmoved, but he cannot have welcomed the strength of parliamentary opposition which Taylor exposed.

It was a sombre and moving occasion. All those present were well aware that this was the last time they would see Taylor speak there as Lord Chief Justice. He was a warm and clubbable man, a popular member of the Garrick, and was held in great affection. Even as he and Michael Howard were attacking one another in public, both of them insisted that there was no personal animosity involved.

A few weeks earlier, Taylor had delivered his last judgment in court. Rosemary West, convicted of murdering ten young women whose remains were found at houses she had occupied, was refused leave to appeal. The Lord Chief Justice and the two judges sitting with him dealt briskly with the legal arguments put to them: their ruling did little to advance the law on such topics as "similar fact evidence" or the rules for "severing" an indictment. But the crucial sentence was to be found in their last paragraph. "The concept of all these murders and burials taking place at the applicant's home and concurrently grave sexual abuse of other young girls being committed by both husband and wife together without the latter being party to the killings is," declared the judges, "clearly one the jury were entitled to reject." In other words, Taylor was saying, Rosemary West must have been involved: it stood to reason. This was typical of his plain man's, commonsense, approach to the law.

Certainly, it was not an unexpected view from someone who aimed to make the judiciary more "user friendly", to give it a human face. More than that, it reflected a burning sense of his own role at the apex of the judiciary. In all he did, whether tackling the wrongs which had given rise to miscarriages of justice, or battling on the political front for the judges' independence and freedom to fit a sentence to the crime, he was both fearless and passionate.

He is survived by his three daughters and son.

SIR HENRY PEAT



Sir Henry Peat, KCVO, DFC, chartered accountant and former Auditor to the Queen's Privy Purse, died on April 4 aged 83. He was born on April 14, 1913.

HENRY PEAT came from a family of well-known chartered accountants and did not seek to escape the profession that ran in his blood. Educated at Eton and Trinity College, Oxford, he joined the family firm of Peat Marwick (then Peat Marwick Mitchell) as an articled clerk in the late 1930s, qualifying in 1940.

To an adventurous and

high-spirited young man the prospect of spending the war in a reserved occupation had no appeal and, though his calling was protected under the National Service Acts, he volunteered to join the Royal Air Force as early as 1939. He was accepted but, much to his chagrin, found himself once again desk bound, controlling uniforms and equipment. He applied many times for more active service but was always turned down. Eventually he discovered that, given the casualties among rear-gunners, if he applied for that specific role he would be accepted. In spite of the handi-

cap of being more than 6ft tall, he did apply and was accepted for training.

He joined Bomber Command and soon became a popular member of his mess, being a competent pianist and generous enough companion to lend his car to his friends when he was away flying. He flew some forty missions as "tail-end Charlie", mainly in Lancasters, and had his share of lucky escapes — the most notable being the occasion when his heavily-laden aircraft failed to take off properly, ploughed through some nearby trees and broke up. The rear cockpit broke away

from the main structure and remained relatively intact, allowing Peat to scramble clear and to help pull his comrades from the wreckage. Unfortunately, not all of them survived. In recognition of his many bombing missions with the RAF he was awarded the DFC.

After the war Peat returned to the family accountancy firm, eventually becoming a partner. He followed both his father and grandfather in being made Auditor to the Queen's Privy Purse and, having been appointed CVO in 1973, was advanced to KCVO in 1980.

During the 1960s he had joined the management committee of the Chartered Accountants' Benevolent Association and eventually became their president — a position he held until his death. He was a very active participant in the affairs of the association, seeing it grow to having more than 500 beneficiaries. During the 1980s, together with the then secretary, he visited more than a quarter of the families on the association's books.

He retired in 1983 from Peat Marwick and went to live full-time in the Wiltshire countryside. Unfortunately, during the past year his health deteriorated to such an extent that he had to be moved into a local nursing home. He was married in 1932 but the marriage was later dissolved. He is survived by two sons and a daughter.

EULALIE SPICER

Eulalie Spicer, OBE, solicitor, died on March 29 aged 90. She was born on April 20, 1906.

EULALIE SPICER, one of the founders of the Legal Aid Scheme, secured her position in the legal establishment during the Second World War, running the Services Divorce Department.

By the end of 1942 the War Office had become seriously concerned about the morale of non-commissioned servicemen and women whose marriages were shaky. The volume of matrimonial litigation was rising fast but, with many solicitors and barristers serving in the Armed Forces, the existing scheme was severely strained. In response to these developments, the Law Society set up the Services Divorce Department. Spicer was appointed supervising solicitor.

Only four years qualified, she had recently joined the Law Society, from a small firm of solicitors, to undertake war work. In the process, she became one of the country's earliest salaried solicitors.

Under considerable pressure to prove herself, Spicer worked hard and developed a tough, somewhat masculine exterior. Not even close colleagues addressed her by her Christian name. She wore her hair in an Eton crop, never used make-up and occasionally dressed in a suit and tie. At various stages in life she played saxophone in her older

brother's dance band, and was reckoned a handy shot with a rifle. Until she was 80, she smoked cigarettes through a long amber holder.

But even for unconventional women it was not easy at that period to draw from clients the necessary level of detail relating to adultery ("no fault" divorce had not then been invented). For an unmarried woman, dealing with more worldly clients, it could be especially difficult. She sometimes found the work distasteful, but earnestly believed in facilitating divorce, particularly if children were involved.

Spicer jointly edited the 15th edition of the standard work *Law on Divorce*, and was solely responsible for editing the 4th edition of *Phillips Practice of the Divorce Division*. Even before the war ended, the Government started planning for legal services to be incorporated in the welfare state. Spicer worked with senior figures such as Sir Thomas Lundy of the Law Society and Dick Thesiger of the Lord Chancellor's Department on devising a structure for what later became the Legal Aid Scheme.

The scheme was formally introduced in October 1950, and Spicer was appointed secretary of the No 1 London area committee, handling appeals from lower committees. Out of the 12 areas across England and Wales, No 1 London was the most successful. The workload was formi-

dable: after Spicer left it was considered large enough to split into two.

Law Society rules obliged her to retire in 1966 — she had been appointed OBE in 1961 — but she continued to work for seven years in private practice. She advised insurers, including a Lloyd's syndicate.

Eulalie Evan Spicer was born in Kent. Her upbringing was comfortable, thanks to the family's success in the writing-paper business. She attended Sir Helen's School in Northwood, Middlesex, then studied philosophy at King's College London, and at University College (her PhD was on Aristotle's conception of the soul).

Her family was devout: one uncle was Dean of Manchester. Spicer herself became secretary of the Legal Aid Committee of the Church of England's General Synod, and advised on changes to divorce law during the 1960s.

In retirement, her academic and religious interests flourished. She served for many years as a governor of her old school, and took a BD in theology at King's College. In October 1976, she was admitted and licensed by the Bishop of London as a lay reader.

Until she died, Eulalie Spicer continued to play an active part in churches around the home in Dolphin Square, Piccadilly, which she had shared with her mother in the early 1950s.

She was unmarried and is survived by two nephews.

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Promises, promises — made to be broken

Tony Blair has said it again. Labour has no plans to privatise Channel 4. But do the mild words spoken to Sir David Frost on BBC1 on Sunday morning constitute a promise? Not many people believe that Labour, if tomorrow goes its way, will resist for long the temptation to sell off Channel 4 to cover more pressing commitments. Will Labour honour the equally delicate promise it has given British Telecom that it is "minded" to relax the restrictions that, for now, keep BT out of the entertainment business? This issue has made no headlines. But we all have telephones. Freeing BT to sell movies by phone line could affect us all.

Judging when a promise has been broken is as hard as deciding when one has been made. I was astounded by the Independent Television Commission's rebuke to the ITV companies last week for "showing too much drama". Surely the ITC knows that what we see on ITV nationally is decided not by the companies but by the powerful ITV Network Centre. Rapping the companies for the network's decisions is like penalising the players for the coach's mistake.

But is the ITV network schedule such a mistake? It's not as if the channel were filled with game shows. The dramas, even the soaps, have been good. ITV's ruling council employs the Network Centre and its supreme, Marcus Plautin, to design a schedule that will meet the contradictory obligations laid on ITV. To attract mass audiences, to earn a lot of money (so the companies can meet their payments to the Treasury) and to fulfil public service requirements, not the least of which is to spoil every evening's entertainment by plonking *News at Ten* in the middle. To ask that the companies offer sober documentaries and risky new comedies to a centre mandated to please the audience is an exercise in futility.

The ITC has explained that it directed its criticism at the ITV companies because its powers to review performance extend only to them. These won their licences in part because of their programme promises. All the regulator can do, therefore, is to point out when a promise is not kept. Fair enough — except didn't the ITC also approve the national networking arrangements? If the web connecting the 15 regional companies to Network Centre is now labyrinthine, the ITC must demand clearer lines of responsibility for what gets on the screen.

Being a regulator is not easy. The ITC has to make tough judgments that are then open to judicial review. So far, when challenged in court by disappointed losers, it has won every time. But a big one is coming up. In the next few weeks the commission has the unenviable duty of choosing between two applicants for a commercial digital terrestrial

TV service. The choice would be easier if there were four or five. But there are only two, both breathing hard in pursuit of what they see as a great prize.

The contenders could hardly be more different. The early favourite was BDB, an amalgam of Carlton, Granada and BSkyB (part-owned by the owner of *The Times*). Considering the weight of the two ITV parent companies, this tripartite alliance would hardly seem to justify the "Murdoch" label that some have slapped on it. Even so, Granada and BSkyB are heavily committed to launching digital television in its rival non-terrestrial, or satellite, form.

Will BDB's allegiance to digital satellite make it less than wholehearted in pursuing the terrestrial cause?

DTN, the other bidder, points in contrast to its own totally terrestrial plans, and to virtues such as city-based programming, 40 channels of interactive services, and pay-TV channels at half the price of current cable and satellite subscription channels. The new price structure, which has increased subscriber penetration in cable areas, allows customers to pick and pay for only the particular channels they want, not for a pre-packaged bundle.

The ITC will, however, have to weigh up the BDB charge that its rivals' offerings are too futuristic and varied, either to pay their way or to tempt today's customers into making the investment in the required new set-top equipment to get digital going fast. The ITC could dodge a difficult choice, by splitting the available package of frequencies. That will satisfy nobody.

My own hunch is not until the required digital equipment is incorporated in the TV set will most people be tempted to buy it.

But the digital terrestrial decision is not the most important pending in British broadcasting. Nor is the decision on Channel 4's new head, although the board should make up its mind fast. No, the most serious outstanding commitment is that the next government resolve to keep C4 out of the hands of shareholders. Privatizing it would destroy its anarchic diversity. Look at ITV.

You would think that BDB and DTN could have chosen more imaginative names. A lot of energy is going into designing new corporate names. Liz Forgan, the ex-head of BBC Radio, has just incorporated herself as "Most Media".

Production companies are making their way in the crowded marketplace under such bright labels as Hat Trick, Absolutely, Working Title, Ginger, Five Two Five, Bottom Line, Wild Dreams, Open Mike and Last Laugh. Considering the capacity of the younger royals to be misunderstood, Prince Edward may have been unwise to choose "Ardent".



BRENDA MADDOX

Cooke directs by example

WHEN the actress Orla Brady became nervous about stripping off for a steamy love scene with Nigel Havers, her leading man in the BBC1 drama *The Heart Surgeon*, the show's director Audrey Cooke decided to lead by example.

Reluctant to keep her crew hanging around while Brady steeled herself for the action, Cooke, an attractive thirtyish strawberry blonde known for her no-nonsense approach to work, peeled to the waist to show the timid actress exactly how it should be done. "I've never done it before and I certainly won't be doing it again," she says. "But the scene was crucial and Orla was wearing a big T-shirt and would not take it off. She wanted to see on the monitor how much she would be revealing, so I said 'OK' and I stripped off to show her."

Cooke's (mostly male) crew did not know where to look and developed a sudden and deep interest in the wall behind them. She says: "You should have seen their faces."



Audrey Cooke, left, showed Orla Brady, right, how to strip

Normally, the director is the least glamorous person on set, covered in 15 sets of thermals, a hat, a sweater and a big scarf.

The strategy worked and Brady bared all. "After seeing me topless," Cooke adds, "she reckoned nothing could be worse than that."

Falkirk's Scottish FA Cup run is providing a sales boost for the Falkirk Herald. The town's giant-killers have beaten Celtic to secure a place in the final on May 24. The link was noted by Freddie Johnston, chairman of Johnston Press, which publishes the title. His ancestors took the paper, a weekly, which now sells 34,000 a week, in lieu of a

titled production about Dublin gangs and drug barons. Patrick Bergin will co-star.

The Ryder film will have a big advantage over Bruckheimer's offering because it was in preparation before Guerín was gunned down. In fact, Guerín was acting as sole story-line consultant to its writers, Michael Sheridan and Ronan Gallagher.

Food for thought

THE secret camera has become a vital tool for investigative television reporters trying to uncover illegal arms deals, drug-trafficking and other heinous crimes, and political repression. The microtechnology that has made these gizmos possible is now being employed by practitioners at the less dangerous end of the profession: restaurant reviewing.

The cable station Channel One equipped reporter Richard Stafford and cameraman Andrew Barron with a tiny camera disguised as a pair of spectacles for *Clandestine Critic*, a new slot in *East Up*, its weekly food programme.

The intrepid duo came a cropper, however, when filming their first assignment — a review of London's latest eatery, the Oxo Tower, a restaurant perhaps best known for its bad service.

Whizzing off

THE latest high-ranking executive to leave the BBC is Fabiola Arrondondo, a 30-year-old American whiz kid brought in less than a year ago to head BBC Worldwide's international distribution arm.

The departure of Arrondondo, who has previously worked for the German media giant Bertelsmann and the US investment bank J.P. Morgan, is an acute embarrassment for the Beeb. She was brought in to inject some tough commercial realism and dynamism into the Corporation's international operations, yet insiders suggest that she left because she had become frustrated at not being given the power to implement many of her decisions, which would have brought about these very goals.

Arrondondo is believed to have had particular difficulties over the BBC's much-hyped joint venture with Discovery Communications, which now seems unlikely to be agreed until the summer.

Less is more entertaining

"THE smaller the budget the better the ad" was one of the conclusions reached by 50 media journalists at a special advertising event last week.

The event, hosted by Ammirati Puris Lintas, famous for Perrier's award-winning advertising, was an informal reworking of the British Television Advertising Awards held in March — an attempt to see whether journalists would agree with the "lurve" judges.

While the journalists agreed with awarding Blackcurrant Tango top prize, they upgraded one of Umbro's low-budget Euro '96 ads, which started three blokes in a pub chatting about football, as well as a black and white First Direct film featuring Bob Mortimer jumping a bus queue. At the same time, they downgraded Levi's lavish "mermaids" commercial.

As if to fuel the theory further, no car commercials, which are among the most expensive to film, made it onto

ADVERTISING

either list. Could this mean that too much money in the hands of adfolk can be foolishly misspent.

HOWELL Henry Chaldecott Lury, the agency behind Tango and Martini, has always prided itself on alternative business practices.

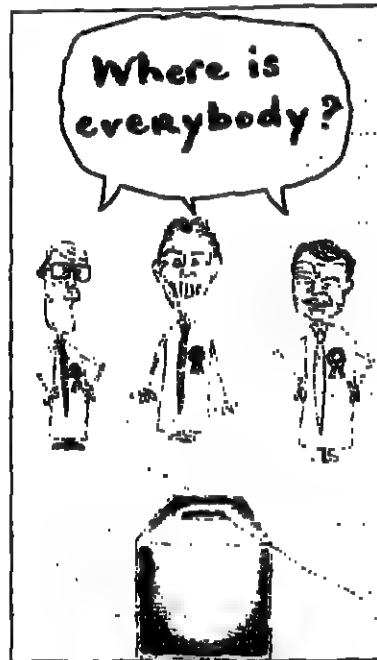
After implementing "flexible meetings" — in which clients are offered several layers of advice — and outlawing all job titles, the 10-year-old agency is now phasing in "roaming", alias its Roving Office Mobility Project. Translated, this means that employees have no fixed abode in the office, and rub shoulders with different colleagues every day.

The agency has also just christened several new meeting rooms after its five founding principles — The

Church Hall (collaboration), The Airport (thinking ahead), The Laboratory (innovation), The Stadium (competitiveness) and The Court House (accountability).

ADVERTISING agencies, always quick to spot an opportunity, have been exploiting election fever. First was Old El Paso, with its spoof Party Political Broadcast, then Tango with its Vote Orange ad, but in the past few days both John Smith's Bitter and British Airways have launched their own campaigns. Smith has adapted the Labour poster, *Britain Deserves Bitter*, to read "Britain Deserves Bitter". BA has launched a variation on its "Where is everybody?" theme with an ad featuring the three party leaders asking the same question as they stand in front of a ballot box.

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Strong non-execs failed

LORD TEBBIT was a former Cabinet minister, well able to disguise his finer feelings when faced with tough decisions. He is so proud of his famous exhortation to the unemployed that they should board their bicycles and head off in search of work, that he pens a regular column for *The Sun* under the heading "On Your Bike".

But as a long-standing director of Sears, his lordship clearly took a more sympathetic view when faced with deciding the fate of Liam Strong. The disaster-prone chief executive is at last being sent on his way, but with up to £500,000 in his saddle bags.

Institutional investors who have been crying out for management change at Sears yesterday too relieved by Strong's departure to cavil over the cost. However, the raft of private shareholders who have seen their investment deteriorate over the past five years may feel less sanguine about the handout. There is no doubting the scale of the task that faced the former British Airways marketing director when he walked blithely into the group's Oxford Street head office. His public statements at the time indicate either that Strong completely underestimated the difficulties or showed an honourable, but foolhardy, sensitivity to the *ancien régime*. What became increasingly ob-

vious as he littered successive annual reports with platitudes and promises, was that even if he had realised the inherent problems in Sears, he was not capable of righting them. British Shoe Corporation was the running sore at Sears when Strong arrived, and, while the scale of the business has been cut back, its losses are growing.

Strong's ill-judged deal to offload some of the shops on to Stephen Hinchliffe, the persuasive entrepreneur who is now the subject of an SFO inquiry, was a measure of his desperation. But the board should have realised that it was increasingly clear that he could not build the team that an enterprise of Sears's size needed: the roll call of departures would have worried the most gung-ho hire and fire merchants.

Yet, while the City grew increasingly perturbed by his performance, the Sears board made him a protected species. The Sears boardroom had its heavyweights. Apart from Lord Tebbit, whose credentials as a retail expert remain something of a mystery, the doughty Sir

Alick Rankin, currently chairman of Bank of Scotland, has been a director since the pre-Strong days. David McDonald, chairman of Pittards, has been there since 1981. Why did they let the misery wear on? It is said that the ultimate power in the hands of an unhappy non-executive director is that of resignation: Peter Edwood, of Lloyds TSB did resign, but chose to do so quietly over Christmas. If his move was a gesture of protest, it was totally ineffective, and if it was not, then he too should be asked to make a contribution to that £500,000 that Strong is to pocket.

Markets call a Labour win

TOMORROW'S poll is reckoned to be such a foregone conclusion in the markets that the post-election bounce is happening before the election. Yesterday's sharp rise in the FTSE 100 index, taking it within a shrew's whisker of its March 11 high, owes something to Wall Street's rapid climb back up the



slippery pole. That is by no means the whole story. Sterling rose against the dollar as well as against the mark, to a level that is no more sustainable now than it was in 1992.

This is not a comment on the parties, unlike the 5 per cent share price jump after John Major's surprise 1992 win. Rather it is a natural expression of relief that one uncertainty is over. Markets rarely discount expected events fully, so there might well be enough of a rise on Friday to send the index into new territory, unless Wall Street takes a strong hand. Buying decisions stalled pending the result of the six-week campaign are simply being released. No bets are now being taken

on Labour to win so, in time-honoured fashion, sporting traders are turning to the minutiae of the count to fine-tune their post-election tactics. A tiny majority or hung Parliament would go down badly; a landslide might revive foreign fears of the social-liberal monster. The world of finance, conducting its usual love affair with the tedious, hopes for a "sound" 40-60 seat majority.

Relief is unlikely to last long. Attention will soon shift to the planned May 7 meeting of the Chancellor and the Governor to discuss monetary policy. The foreign exchanges assume that if Gordon Brown attends, base rates will rise a quarter point. If Kenneth Clarke were there, this would not be self-evident. Mr Brown is thought certain to accede to the Governor's inevitable request as a way of presenting his references to the Worshipful Company of Speculators. He could as easily deduce that there is no need, or put on half a point to send speculators packing or postpone the meeting for a week. Thereafter, speculation in the equity market will centre on Mr Brown's emer-

gency Budget, due in two months time. The timid institutional investor's search for certainty is doomed to endless frustration.

Achieving the impossible

HARRY MOORE, chief executive of Co-operative Retail Services, ended his results presentation yesterday by quoting the Labour Party theme tune: "Things can only get better." What he really meant to say was: "Things can't get much worse."

A loss of £13.9 million after restructuring charges of £18.1 million with sales slipping 0.9 per cent to £1.54 billion amounts to something most thought impossible. The CRS has managed to produce an even more appalling set of figures than the Co-operative Wholesale Society, the business that was once its sister but is now its competitor.

Galvanised into action by the attentions of one Andrew Regan, the CWS has suggested that the two Co-operative organisations merge. But the CRS will have none of it, saying its own overtures in

that direction, most recently in 1994, were rudely spurned.

The prospect of co-operation now seems likely to be superseded by the sort of battle for supremacy commercial organisations play. A coming together has to happen eventually, but on whose terms? Moore reckons CRS has the better management and wants a couple of years to show this. The target is to invest £200 million this year in new systems, facias, and stores, delivering 5 per cent return on sales (against 1.5 per cent now) and a 50 per cent rise in sales per square foot to £12.

This might not be much in the real world but under the arcane umbrella of the Co-op it gives Moore the ammunition to turn to the CWS and say: "We're clearly the better society. We should take control of the whole movement."

Do not pass 'Go'

NOMURA has added its name to the list of those who feel snubbed by the non-bid for CWS. In bringing so many big City names to such public humiliation, Andrew Regan has achieved the sort of coup some critics of the Square Mile might never have thought possible. He has also guaranteed that this is one thrusting young entrepreneur who will, in future, have to confine his ambitions to the Monopoly board.



Gilles Pelisson, marking the park's fifth anniversary with actresses Melanie Griffith and Ornella Muti, wants growth

Euro Disney losses grow as interest payments rise

By ADAM JONES

LOSSES at Euro Disney, the theme park operator, increased in the first half of 1997 after a rise in the interest payments demanded on its £1.5 billion debts, the company said yesterday.

In the six months to March 31, traditionally a low season, it lost £120 million compared with £169 million in the same period last year.

Euro Disney is 39 per cent owned by the Walt Disney Co. Prince al-Waleed bin Talal, the Saudi Arabian investor, took a 24 per cent stake in 1994. Turnover from its Disneyland Paris theme park and

resort rose 12.5 per cent to £2.1 billion over the six months as prices were held at 1996 levels. However, the interim results were dragged down by an £168 million rise in charges, to £136 million.

Euro Disney had enjoyed an interest payment holiday on some debts after its 1994 restructuring. These financing charges began to kick in again last year, to the tune of an extra £120 million. The additional cost in the full 1997 fiscal year is estimated to be £200 million. This should grow by a further £120 million in 1998.

Gilles Pelisson, chairman, said Disneyland Paris was managing seasonal fluctua-

tions better. "Growth in the high season remains vital to counter the sharp increase in financial charges."

A Euro Disney spokesman added that 1997 is the crunch year: "We will have to keep improving and improving to meet these financial charges. This year is going to be the most difficult."

A consistent year-on-year revenue rise of at least 5 per cent is needed to meet the extra finance and leasing costs.

A new cinema and conference centre will be opened in the next six months. He said there should also be room for admission fee increases in 1998. They are currently £150-

£195 for adults and £120-£150 for children. Income from commercial development of land near Disneyland Paris should come onstream in the same year.

However, royalty and management fees will have to be paid to Disney from 1998. The cost is estimated at about £200 million a year.

Euro Disney recorded a profit before exceptional of £156 million in 1996, only the second year it had been in the black. One analyst forecast £110 million this year. In London Euro Disney shares fell to 105p from 107p.

Tempos, page 32

BA shares rise on USAir sale report

By OLIVER AUGUST

SHARES in British Airways rose yesterday amid speculation that it was close to announcing the sale of its 24.6 per cent stake in USAir.

They rose from 694p to 704p on speculation that it could be paid as much as \$530 million for its holding of preference shares, which has to be sold to at least five separate parties. A BA spokesman said: "We have moved a step closer to a sale."

BA paid \$400 million for its USAir stake in 1993, subsequently writing it down by £125 million in 1995 to reflect the American airline's precarious financial position at the time. However, USAir's fortunes

have improved. Last year it resumed dividend payments which had been suspended in 1994. George Soros, the investor, recently sold his 5 per cent stake in USAir at a profit.

BA can sell its stake privately or in a public offering, but cannot sell the shares in one block without regulatory approval. Under the terms of purchase, BA cannot allow any buyer to hold more than 5 per cent of USAir's stock.

BA first said in December that it planned to sell its stake at a premium. Three BA directors have since resigned from US Air's board as the two carriers' divorce continues.

Air London given a lift by executive jets

By FRASER NELSON

DEMAND for executive jets has fuelled growth at Air London, the aircraft charter broker, which overcame a downturn in its holiday aircraft business to return record interim profits.

It blamed tight margins and costs of recruiting extra staff for the 17 per cent profits drop at its commercial aircraft division, but said the sharp jump in demand for private jets had overcome this.

Tony Mack, chairman, said: "The strength of our business is that one division can do well and the reverse can happen in the second half. But overall profits will always

go up." However, he said there is unlikely to be a repeat of last November's 10p special dividend in the near future.

Pre-tax profits rose 13 per cent to £1.12 million on sales up 10 per cent at £17.9 million. Earnings rose to 7.5p (6.5p) a share. The interim dividend is 2.5p (1.9p).

Mr Mack, who owns 60 per cent of the company, picked up £541,000 through the special dividend and stands to pocket £135,000 from the increased interim payment, due on June 20. The shares, which have doubled in value over the past 12 months, fell to 243p from 251p.

City Diary, page 33

Nintendo in price war with Sony

NINTENDO, the Japanese computer games company, is to cut the cost of its new N64 games machine from £250 to £150 in an attempt to torpedo the success of Sony's Playstation (Fraser Nelson writes).

The move, which will be accompanied by a £1.5 million advertising campaign, will come as a shock to those who bought 75,000 of the N64s at the full price after its launch last month.

Nintendo said it is making an aggressive move to bring itself into head-on competition with the Playstation, the price of which has been cut from £200 to £130.

Recent figures from Chart-Track, an independent market research body, show the Playstation has 65 per cent of the market, with the N64 at 5.5 per cent.

Cairn Energy and Shell in \$200m Asian alliance

By CARL MORTSHED

CAIRN ENERGY and Shell have entered into a \$200 million alliance to develop Cairn's gas interests in Bangladesh and to seek further upstream and power projects in Bangladesh, India and neighbouring Asian countries.

Cairn has agreed to give up half of its interest in two blocks offshore of Bangladesh, including a half share in Cairn's 75 per cent interest in the Sangu field, believed to contain more than a trillion cubic feet of gas. In exchange, Shell will pay Cairn \$130 million and will fund all exploration and development costs, up to a total of \$200 million.

Cairn will immediately transfer a 25 per cent of its Bangladesh interests to Shell, with the second 25 per cent dependent on the success of the Cairn/Shell alliance in securing new acreage in a



Gammell: outlined objective

forthcoming Bangladeshi oil licensing round.

Bill Gammell, Cairn's chief executive, said the company's strategic position in southern Asia would be considerably enhanced. "I could justify the deal on the basis of existing acreage, but the objective is to get 50 per cent of four blocks."

The alliance creates an area of mutual interest (AMI) in Bangladesh, under which Cairn is entitled to up to a half share in any new upstream pipeline or power development, including gas into crude oil plants using Shell's proprietary technology. The alliance extends further into India, where the partners have created another area of mutual interest. The intention is to exploit the region's huge energy market, with the prospect of a pipeline to export gas from Bangladesh to India.

Cairn and Shell are now in discussions over prospects in neighbouring countries in Asia. Shares in the exploration company soared after the discovery of the Sangu gasfield last year, raising the prospect of further giant gasfields in the two offshore blocks under Cairn's control.

Tempos, page 32

AND IF YOUR MIND clings shut at the mere mention of the word million, consider this: if you add up your lifetime earnings - past and future - you will see that you will almost certainly earn a fortune in your lifetime. It could add up to a million pounds - or more.

The trouble is, like most people you'll earn it - and spend it.

Of course, what you could be doing is taking this fortune and turning some of it into another fortune - the one you want to end up with.

But you'll probably say you've been too busy to attend to this yourself - or perhaps managing money today just seems too complicated.

Maybe you think you should entrust your money to an expert. If you do, you may be disappointed. The shocking truth is many professional fund managers are not much good at what they do. Most of them do more poorly than the Stockmarket as a whole. The only certainty about letting others manage your money is that you'll let them help themselves to a chunk of it through their fees.

IN FACT the widely-accepted Random Walk theory says that you will beat the pros at picking shares by simply identifying yourself and sticking a pin in the share table in your newspaper. Incredible, but true.

Look at unit trusts. The vast majority of them underperform the Stockmarket in general over time. They would have actually lost you money compared to buying shares at random!

So the question is: Why pay fat commissions and "management fees" to have a so-called professional manage your money?

What about seeking advice from a financial adviser - someone who'll give you sound and impartial advice on what best to do with your hard-earned money. Well, you're going to have to look quite hard.

Firstly, most financial advisers aren't independent. They're not even allowed to call themselves that. That's because they're employed by the big financial fund managers to sell their products, and their products alone. They're really just salesmen.

So what about those who are allowed to call themselves independent financial advisers? Consider this fact: most IFAs earn their living from commission from the products they sell. Yet some of the best investments are run by firms which pay no commission. How likely do you think it is they'll be on your IFAs' shortlist of recommended investments if there's a commission-paying firm offering a remotely similar product?

That... let's face it... most people find today's world of personal finances too

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Douglas Moffitt, TV and Radio Financial Commentator

complicated - and too tedious. In short, they're stuck. They are successful in many other respects. But when it comes to investing and money management they have no real plan. All because there's been no simple way to get started. That is, until now...

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FOR EXAMPLE, a little technique called a "straddle", lets you bet that the Stockmarket will go up - and at the same time bet that it will go down - believe it or not, it is perfectly possible to make a profit whether it goes up or goes down.

Or how you can use your pension plan to turn £770 into £1,000 overnight -

or more if you're a higher rate taxpayer. Of course there's a good deal more. But as you can see Successful Personal Investing is definitely not just some collection of "hot tips" or boring technical mumbo-jumbo.

Always everything is spelled out step-by-step, like a simple recipe. So you take just those steps that are right for your own circumstances. BEAR IN MIND TOO, that the publisher of SPI, Independent Research Services Ltd., is not linked in any way to any vested interests. It is not connected with any Stockbroker or Insurance Agency or Unit Trust or the like - and it has no commissioned Salesmen or Agents. So you can be absolutely sure that what you learn will be for no one's benefit but yours.

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Saints chairman to stand down

GUY ASKHAM, who has been heavily criticised by fans for his role in the flotation of Southampton Football Club, yesterday said he will step down as chairman of the Saints at the end of season (Alasdair Murray writes).

Mr Askham, who has been chairman for eight years, will be replaced by Rupert Lowe, who is also chairman of Southampton Leisure, the club's holding company. Mr Askham will remain as deputy chairman of Southampton Leisure. Mr

Lowe said that Mr Askham had simply decided it was time to pass on the chairman's role. Mr Lowe added that the board had decided to appoint him in a dual capacity to help to shorten the lines of communication as the club moves towards building its new stadium.

Supporters have voiced concern over a deal in which several Southampton directors bought shares in the club from an investment company, formerly linked to Mr Askham, just weeks before the £10

million takeover by Secure Retirement. Shares in the company closed down 22p at 90p.

Shares of Burnden Leisure, the new owner of Bolton Wanderers, closed at 62p on the first day of trading after touching a high of 77p. The company was formed via a reverse takeover of Bolton by Mosaic Investments, the investment vehicle of David Williams, the entrepreneur.

City Diary, page 33

NEWS

Rivals unite against euro chief

■ John Major and Tony Blair were united in condemnation yesterday of a European commissioner's call for Britain to be excluded from a seat at world financial summits if it did not join a single currency.

Kenneth Clarke also joined the criticism, so that Yves-Thibault de Silguy, the commissioner responsible for monetary union, achieved the rare feat of putting the Chancellor on the same side as his Eurosceptic critics. Pages 1, 9-16, 22, 23

British Library readers may have to pay

■ The British Library is exploring plans to introduce charges for its reading room. After 250 years of free access, it plans to broach the subject with its 400,000 readers by distributing a questionnaire this week. Members will be asked how they feel about 21 possible annual charges. Page 1

Lord Taylor dies

Court hearings were halted as judges and lawyers gathered to pay tribute to Lord Taylor of Gossforth. The former Lord Chief Justice died of a brain tumour at his home in Guildford. Page 1

Blair invokes Smith

Tony Blair invoked the memory of John Smith as he launched Labour's final push for victory with his predecessor's appeal for "the chance to serve". Page 1

Prison rampage

Loyalist prisoners went on the rampage at the Maze jail in protest at security restrictions. Page 2

Boy George victory

Boy George did have a homosexual affair with the rock musician Kirk Brandon, a High Court judge ruled, rejecting a "malicious falsehood" action against the singer. Page 3

Ugly art crime

An undercover policeman was sold a stolen picture of a woman "so ugly that only her son would have painted it" without one of the vendors realising it was *Portrait of his Mother* by Rembrandt, a court was told. Page 4

A lighter bite

British chocolate, already criticised by the European Union as a fraud upon the public, took another step on the road to degradation with the launch of two "low fat" chocolate bars. Page 5

Family tree reveals far-flung branches

■ When Lord Tordoff's family grew tired of people asking if their surname was Russian, they decided to trace their roots. They did not bargain on an invitation to a family reunion in a Yorkshire village hall. Among the 300 people there were a Buddhist monk, an American clown, a novelist and a documentary film-maker from Devon — but no Russians. Page 4

Gulf illness study

Servicemen and women are being encouraged to participate in an official study into the cause of Gulf War illnesses with the offer of a £1,000 cash prize. Page 6

Road to democracy

It seemed like a good idea to track down the remotest voter in Britain, the one who will have to travel furthest to exercise his democratic right at a polling station. Page 11

Israel warns Syria

Israel issued an unprecedented warning to President Assad after the disclosure that Syria has, with Russian aid, begun to manufacture a nerve gas. Page 17

French debate EU

Europe dogged the French election campaign as new figures pointed to more public spending cuts as France prepares for monetary union. Page 18

Europe rebuffs Iran

EU foreign ministers agreed to return their ambassadors to Tehran but announced the indefinite cancellation of Europe's high-level dialogue with Iran in response to official Iranian support for terrorism. Page 18

Rebel 'atrocities'

As the rebels in Zaire push towards the capital, Kinshasa, details are emerging of alleged human rights violations in territory they control. Page 19



A fireman lights a flare amid a noisy demonstration in Chelmsford in support of striking Essex Fire Brigade staff. Page 2

BUSINESS

Co-op: The Serious Fraud Office is to launch an investigation into a deal in 1995 between the Co-operative Wholesale Society and Hobson Group, a company then controlled by Andrew Regan. Page 29

Economy: New consumer credit figures showed growth slowing in March. Total net lending fell from £3.06 billion in February to £2.55 billion last month. Page 29

Telecoms: A group led by Carlton Communications has opened negotiations with BT over an alliance to launch digital television in terrestrial form. Page 29

Markets: The FT-SE 100 rose 43.5 to close at 4433.2. Sterling rose from 99.9 to 100.3 after a rise from \$1.6237 to \$1.6310 and from DM2.8054 to DM2.8127. Page 32

SPORT

Football: England's World Cup qualifying tie against Georgia at Wembley is as much about recapturing a mood as securing three more points towards the finals. Page 56

Cricket: Ireland beat Middlesex in the Benson and Hedges Cup to record their first victory over a first-class county side. Page 56

Golf: Nick Faldo has surprisingly decided to return to Britain next month to compete in the Volvo PGA Championship at Wentworth, a favourite course. Page 53

Rugby union: Tom Walkinshaw, whose TWR group controls the Arrows Formula One motor racing team, has injected more than £2 million into the Gloucester club. Page 54

ARTS

Depp charges: How Johnny Depp, the brightest of the brat-pack stars, tackled the role of an FBI agent going undercover to fight the mob in *Donnie Brasco*. Page 37

New morality: For his latest play Joe Penhall, one of our brightest new writers, has abandoned murder and mayhem in favour of hard work and morality. Page 38

Rising star: Neil Rutherford is acting in *Salad Days* on tour, composing a musical, playing in a film, and has just directed a revue. And he is only 27. Page 38

Hanging gardens: Stand in the centre of Sir Norman Foster's Commerzbank tower in Frankfurt and look up, and you peer into a 500ft vertical void filled with gardens. Page 39

FEATURES

Nigella Lawson: The Spice Girls embody the belief that it is acceptable to appear sexually available but unacceptable to be treated as sexually available. Page 21

Model citizen: Why does MORI keep on polling me? Ivan Barnes is the man with the real lead in the polls. Page 21

STYLE

From the top: Stripes have moved from the sports ground to the street. Page 20

Safe and secure: Jane Shilling on the similarity between the familiar item of clothing she is reluctant to throw away and the blanket from which her son hated being separated. Page 20

MEDIA

Paper victory: Nothing so thrills editors as a general election, says Brian MacArthur, the coverage of this time has been fairer than usual. Page 27

THE PAPERS

The majority has made public its electoral programme. The socialists should do the same before the end of the week and Lionel Jospin has just declared that it is time to enter into the heart of the dancer. High time indeed. Because French people are showing a massive indifference towards the two big coalitions who are going to confront each other. — *Le Monde*

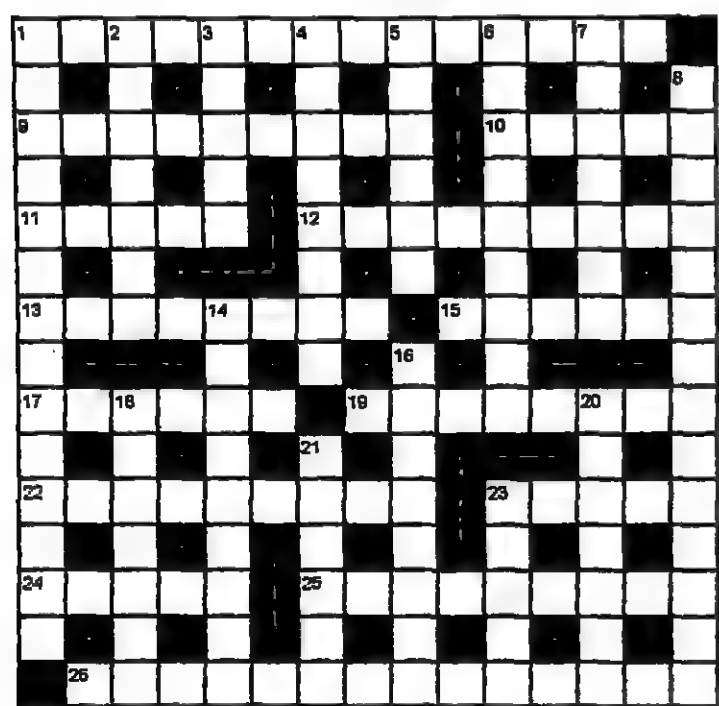
TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES
■ TRAVEL
Why Princess Margaret's favourite Caribbean island is targeting British tourists

■ BOOKS
Marianne Wiggins explains her refusal to be bowled over by Thomas Pynchon's latest



THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,467



- ACROSS**
- Preliminary survey involving deception in revivalist movement (14).
 - A French character on the staff. That's not normal (9).
 - It's laughable, backing Liberal peer (7).
 - Grating officer finally installed in mess (5).
 - Depict spy, somehow, as irritable (9).
 - Plan suit in order to arrive at these? (8).
 - Satisfy opposing players, returning prize (6).
 - Row about doctor's deal, perhaps (6).
 - Month in which no priest returned without honour (8).
 - Symbol of this steel-maker's seen in outskirts of Milan (9).
- DOWN**
- Aspect of planet calling for a few words right away (5).
 - In principle, a stake is the minimum possible (5).
 - Self-confidence at a premium? (9).
 - Businessman intended to accept royal honour before game (8,6).
 - Hug troubled man involved in scuffle (5,3,6).
 - Inclination to take rent for a spell (7).
 - Nick is "chapel", it seems (5).
 - Terrier's extremely good on new lead (8).
 - Secure place in military band, making impact (6).
 - Speech initially embarrasses employer? He should get his cards (9).
 - Her colt's favoring makes us laugh (7).
 - Illicit trader in film, always under censure (5,9).
 - Obdurate aliens organised uncontrollable movement (9).
 - Not all are we hear, situated in an agricultural county (8).
 - Picture Roman, for one, without upper-class involvement (7).
 - 50s drop-out exhausted and upset relatives (7).
 - Boy brought up in an overthrown state (6).
 - Sounds like Charlie Bird's coat (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,466

DEBATE OBEDIENT
ELEPHANT
CHEVALIER ABHOR
IS BURN RARE
DISHRAG INFANTA
ELEGANT
BRIDGE PAKISTAN
SACRILEGIOUS
CINERAMA REVUE
ANNOUNCEMENT
BUFFON GLASSES
SUFFICIENT
OVERLY IRRITABLE
RELEASE LA
BADINAGE FRIEND

Times Two Crossword, page 56

AA INFORMATION

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HIGHEST & LOWEST
Yesterday's highest day temp: Bognor Regis, West Sussex, 15°C (59°F). Lowest day temp: Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, 9°C (48°F).
Calls are charged at 45p per minute (plus 10p per minute at all other times).

FORECAST

□ General: England and Wales should stay mainly dry after early mist or fog clears. Most places should have sunny spells, but the North West will be cloudy with perhaps some light rain. It will be warm, with light winds.

Scotland and Northern Ireland will be cloudy with outbreaks of drizzle or light rain. Drier, clearer weather will follow from the west. The west will be breezy with normal temperatures. The east will have light winds and will feel warm.

□ London, SE England, E Anglia, E Midlands, E England, Central N England: early mist, then dry with sunny spells. Wind northwesterly, light. Max 18C (64F).

□ Central S England, W Midlands, Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales: dry with sunny spells, cloudier later. Wind northwesterly light, later southwesterly. Warm. Max 16C (61F).

□ N Wales, NW England, Lake District: becoming cloudy with perhaps light rain. Wind southwesterly, light to moderate. Max 15C (59F).

□ Isle of Man, NW Scotland, Glasgow, Argyll, NW Scotland, N Ireland: becoming cloudy with light rain or drizzle. Wind southwesterly, moderate, locally fresh. Max 15C (59F).

□ NE England, Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Central Highlands, Moray Firth: dry with sunny spells. Wind southwesterly, light to moderate. Max 14C (57F).

□ NE Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: cloudy with outbreaks of rain. Wind southwesterly fresh, locally strong. Max 12C (54F).

□ Outlook: warm and sunny at first, cooler and cloudy in the north later.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

Area	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Temp	Wind	Cloud
London	15	10	10	15	10	10
Edinburgh	12	10	10	12	10	10
Belfast	10	10	10	10	10	10
Cardiff	12	10	10	12	10	10
Manchester	14	10	10	14	10	10
Sheffield	14	10	10	14	10	10
Nottingham	14	10	10	14	10	10
Leeds	14	10	10	14	10	10
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Election 97: who wins the Oscars?

PAPER ROUND

Brian MacArthur

For newspaper pundits it has been the most frustrating general election for 50 years. At the past three elections we have been appalled but entertained by the three main "Tory tabloids" — *The Sun*, the *Daily Mail* and *The Express* — as they savaged Michael Foot and Neil Kinnock.

The bias was blatant but the journalism was brilliant. Kevin MacKenzie's front page on voting day in 1992 — "If Neil Kinnock wins today will the last person to leave Britain please turn out the lights" — is still remembered, still framed on office walls, five years later. As Joe Haines, once Harold Wilson's press secretary, observed acidly in *The Mirror*, if John Major were caught spending the nation's cash on a French actress, *The Express* would praise his concern for the arts and the *Daily Mail* would see it as further proof of his dedication to Europe.

Tony Blair has been determined that new Labour would not get the same treatment. That is why reporters have been so frustrated by the "control" shown during his campaign. He has also so transformed the Labour Party that most of the issues on which it was attacked are no longer in the manifesto, and assiduously courted editors and proprietors to sell the message that Labour no longer comes with fangs.

The result has been an election in which Fleet Street and the "Tory" tabloids have given Labour an unprecedentedly fair run. No bias, no comment. With *The Sun*, with sales of 4 million a day, declaring for Mr Blair from the outset, the newspaper map was transformed. Eight out of ten of *The Sun's* 160 reports on Labour since April 1 have been neutral or favourable. So were about seven out of ten in *The Express* and the *Daily Mail*. The most partisan paper has been *The Mirror* for Labour. *The Daily Telegraph* has been least negative to the Tories and the *Daily Mail* most critical of Labour.

Yet nothing so thrills the blood of newspaper editors as a general election. An analysis by the MORI subsidiary, Test Research, sponsored by Shandwick, shows that there have been a total of 3,324 articles in the national daily and Sunday newspapers, with *The Times* publishing the

most — 471 — since April 1. With only one day of campaigning left, it is time to assess the coverage and for *Paper Round* to make its awards.

Most stirring front page. "Read this and Weep... Now get Angry" proclaimed *The Mirror* on April 18 as it devoted all its front page to a phone call from a nurse describing at the end of an 18-hour shift how she had watched a young man die on her ward. There were no pictures, only words.

Most acid critic of Tony Blair. *The Daily Telegraph*. Mr Blair wouldn't sell his granny, it said; he would privatise her. Editor Charles Moore has derided Mr Blair as a "man of doublethink" and "proven shiftiness".

Most influential report. "Sleaze: the evidence" in *The Guardian* on March 22. It provoked Tory MP Tim Smith to stand down, put Neil Hamilton in the dock, provoked three weeks of damaging anti-Tory sleaze headlines, and led Martin Bell to Tanton.

Most disillusioned supporter of Mr Blair. Andrew Marr, Editor of *The Independent*, who has been repeatedly upset by Mr Blair, particularly on the subject of Europe. "Politicians, cowed by a handful of millionaires and xenophobic newspapers, haven't the guts to stand up for it... Labour members find their core beliefs publicly reflected better by the Lib Dems than by their own leadership."

Most dogged critic of Mr Blair. Peter Hitchens of *The Express* (who also wrote letters to *The Times* and *The Spectator*). He has constantly harried the Labour leader about his plans to stop other parents following his example of sending their children to grammar schools, earning the most tactless rebuke of the campaign: "We may not call you again if you're going to be bad."

Biggest nightmare. Polly Toynbee in *The Independent* who dreamt that Labour lost. "At 4am on May 2 I am planning a special exit poll of my own in which I shall stand in the High Street... and ask people how they voted. If they



Despite the stirring newspaper headlines, MORI research suggests that readers' declared voting intentions have hardly shifted at all during this election campaign

say Tory, I will shoot them. a quick edit."

Newspapers that have most relished the election. After 18 years in opposition, there have been no inhibitions at *The Guardian* and *The Observer* about boring the readers, and a relish in their reporting that undoubtedly speaks to their constituencies. "Starting this week: a new era," *The Observer* announced last Sunday in

the biggest headlines in its history. *The Guardian* has devoted more space — 56,000 column centimetres — to the election than any other paper.

Star columnist in the making. Richard Eys, director of the National Theatre, in the *Financial Times*. "You might find an Iago in Peter Mandelson, a Malvolio in Brian Mawhinney, a Cassius in Michael Heseltine, a

Claudius in Baroness Thatcher, an Enobarbus in John Prescott, a Lear in Sir Edward Heath and a Jacques in Tony Benn. Lord Tebbit might make a good Fool and you could find plenty of clowns in all parties..."

Most violent columnist. Polly Toynbee in *The Independent*. The trouble with democracy is the voters. Listening to them sometimes makes you despair

— they are stupid, selfish, pig-ignorant, horrible... one more vox pop from some cretin saying, 'They're all the same, aren't they? They're only in it for themselves' and I'll be reaching for my revolver."

Dumbed down? Only paper to publish the manifestos in full. *The Times*. All the rest published only extracts.

Most bizarre spectacle. Lord

Hollick, chairman of United News and Media, owner of *The Express*, arguing for Labour, and Lord Stevens, the chairman, arguing for the Conservatives on a double-page spread in the *Express* on Sunday. Both papers opted for the Conservatives — but at least Mr Blair got more than a word in edgeways.

Most forthcoming proprietor. Lord Rothermere, owner

of the Eurosceptic *Daily Mail* in an interview with the *Financial Times*. "Sometimes I think [Paul Dacre, Editor of the *Mail*] would like to tow England out into the middle of the Atlantic. I am not sure that is what I want to do."

As the six-week campaign ends, Mr Blair has won more endorsements from Fleet Street — 11 out of 19 — than at any time in living memory. Dailies for Mr Blair: *The Sun*, *The Mirror*, the *Daily Star*, *The Guardian* and *The Independent* (both suggesting tactical voting against the Tories) and the *Financial Times*. Sales: 8 million.

Dailies for Mr Major: *The Express*, *The Daily Telegraph* and (almost certainly) the *Daily Mail*. Sales: 4.5 million. Eurosceptic: *The Times*. Sundays for Mr Blair: the *News of the World*, the *Sunday Mirror*, *The People*, *The Observer* and the *Independent* (both suggesting tactical voting). Sales: 9.6 million.

Sundays for Mr Major: *The Express*, the *Mail*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Sunday Telegraph*. Sales: 5.5 million. After the last election, the big question was whether it was *The Sun* "not won it". MORI research suggests that it won't be this time. Readers' declared voting intentions have hardly shifted at all during this campaign.

BIASED TOWARDS NEUTRALITY

Researchers examined news stories relating to policies and graded them from -2 to +2 according to their negative/positive bias. The percentage of stories in each scale was used to calculate each paper's bias index towards each party

TORY POLICIES	Cuttings	No	%	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	Index
Mirror	152	7	81	17	18	1	2	-134(-118)	
Sun	90	4	22	8	48	12	6	-42(-21)	
Star	79	4	22	10	47	19	3	-28(-17)	
Express	124	6	13	15	80	10	3	-25(-26)	
Mail	142	7	14	10	61	14	1	-22(-8)	
Telegraph	271	13	7	15	62	8	4	-15(-6)	
FT	207	10	3	22	72	2	0	-28(-10)	
Guardian	378	18	9	18	68	4	3	-24(-15)	
Independent	282	19	9	14	70	3	3	-22(-14)	
Times	275	13	4	23	53	7	2	-30(-9)	
LABOUR POLICIES									
Mirror	156	5	1	3	42	13	42	+82(+38)	
Sun	160	6	1	18	20	16	5	+59(+22)	
Star	112	4	3	19	64	8	6	-5(-7)	
Express	193	7	6	19	65	6	4	-17(-28)	
Mail	237	8	7	25	58	4	6	-23(-34)	
Telegraph	427	15	3	13	76	7	2	-8(-9)	
FT	280	10	2	14	80	4	0	-14(-13)	
Guardian	449	16	5	11	73	7	4	-9(-9)	
Independent	489	17	8	8	78	10	1	-4(-5)	
Times	391	14	4	11	73	11	0	-8(-13)	

Source: MCR/PI Research/Analyst 1-25. The figures in brackets are the papers' index score for the first half of the campaign. April 1-11

Source: MORI Test Research/April 1-25. The figures in brackets are the papers' index score for the first half of the campaign, April 1-11

HOW LABOUR AND BLAIR FOUND FAVOUR

HOW THE PARTIES COMPARE - OVERALL COVERAGE

CONSERVATIVE Neutral 30% Favourable 18% Unfavourable 43%

LABOUR Unfavourable 35% Neutral 42% Favourable 18%

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT Unfavourable 21% Favourable 29% Neutral 50%

Source: CAPMA International

JOHN MAJOR - BIAS OF COVERAGE

Negative 25% Positive 11% Neutral 64%

TONY BLAIR - BIAS OF COVERAGE

Negative 18% Positive 24% Neutral 58%

Source: CMS: Precis

All the news that's fit to see

Allen Neuharth, the founder of *USA Today*, has proved that a museum dedicated to journalism, like a good newspaper or a television newscast, need not be dull. The Newsroom, his glitzy \$50 million brainchild, opened last weekend just across the Potomac River from Washington and immediately drew throngs of visitors.

Young and old enjoyed playing interviewer in television newscast mock-ups and browsing among the front pages downloaded that day from newspapers around the world.

Under the approving gaze of a statue of Thoth, the ancient Egyptian god of scribes, the Newsroom displays the history of spreading the news. Exhibits range from 6,000-year-old Algerian rock paintings to an eye-blurring stream of network satellite feeds disgorging breaking news on to a video screen 40 yards across.

Here, too, is a copy of *Public Occurrences*, the first newspaper in British North America, published in 1690, with the back page conveniently left blank so that readers could add their own news before passing it on.

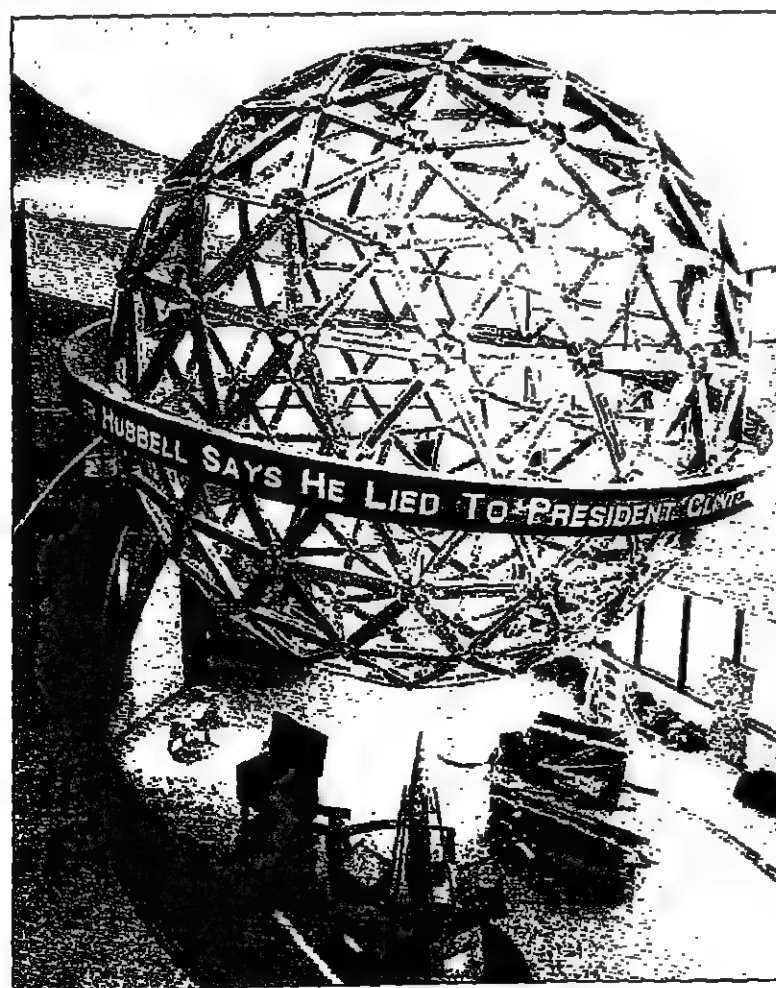
A glance at a bank of TV screens reveals the Berlin Wall falling. *Challenger* blowing up, Reagan being shot, Kennedy being buried. A mini-cinema shows clips of how Hollywood has portrayed the news business, mostly peopled by tough, scruffy, romantic idealists with a tendency to drink too much and to shout into telephones: "OK sweetheart, get me Rewrite."

As Mr Neuharth would say, that is the who, what, when and where of his Newsroom. The why takes longer to explain.

Mr Neuharth is chairman of the Freedom Forum, a foundation dedicated to free speech, free press and free spirit. It is supported by an endowment worth more than \$850 million from Gannett, the publisher of *USA Today*, which is America's largest circulation daily.

Several years ago Mr Neuharth and his trustees became worried about growing antagonism between the public and the press. They concluded that the public's standards for journalism are higher than ever, though some

Hold the front page: a press museum is making headlines, reports Ian Brodie



Lines of communication: the Newsroom in Washington is drawing crowds

journalists may not fully understand that, and that mainstream journalism is better than ever, but the public may not fully realise that, either.

So as well as appealing to busboys and tourists and children on school outings, the Newsroom tries to pose serious questions about the power of the media and its ethics. For example, at one computer screen, visitors are

asked to decide how they would respond to the following dilemma: a newspaper receives an exclusive tip that a famous athlete, now retired, has been diagnosed with Aids. Should the story be pursued and published or should the athlete's privacy be respected, given that he is no longer in the public eye?

Just such a predicament faced *USA*

Today over the late Arthur Ashe, the former Wimbledon champion who contracted Aids through a blood transfusion. The newspaper pressed on with its inquiries, but Ashe cut them short by calling a press conference to announce his grim prognosis.

USA Today was heavily criticised at the time for forcing Ashe to go public. At the Newsroom computer screen, a slim majority still votes against delving into the Ashe story.

President Clinton himself waded in with biting comments on ethics even as the Newsroom was being opened by Al Gore, his Vice-President, and formerly a reporter on *The Tennessee* in Nashville.

In a telephone call to the ceremony, Mr Clinton claimed that reporters under the pressure of intense competition are too quick to accept what he called "near news" as truth. He advised them to return to "old-fashioned" reporting and to check out stories before splashing them all over the front page or on the evening news.

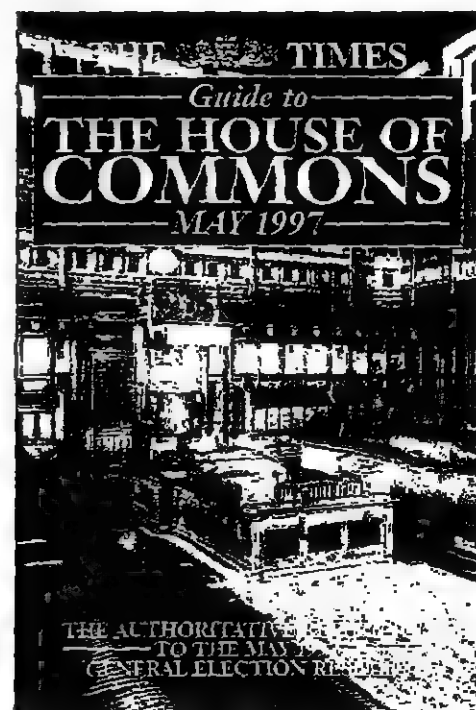
There was a strong element of special pleading in Mr Clinton's comments. He and his wife Hillary, together with their closest aides, are the targets of almost daily disclosures by the largely libel-proof American media over Whitewater and related scandals. The latest barrage has implied, despite strong denials, that "hush money" was paid to their friend Webster Hubbell to buy his silence over his intimate knowledge of the Whitewater dealings.

Ironically, the White House itself has played this guilt-by-association game. It released a report of a purported right-wing conspiracy to plant phony scandal stories on the Internet and in the British press so they could be picked up and legitimised by the American media. The report lost a lot of credibility in describing *The Times* as a tabloid.

The Newsroom is not the place to explore these issues in any depth. It is fun, fast and informative. Better still, it may tempt more than a few of its younger visitors to choose careers as ink-stained wretches or how-dried talking heads.

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Sears turns to cost-cutting company doctor

DAVID JAMES, the executive Sears has brought in to sort out its ailing shoe shops, loves to get his hands on failing businesses. "It's the bad days which are really the fun," he once said. "The day I stop enjoying the bad days, I'll retire."

British Shoe Corporation has had plenty of bad days in the past few years. Sears' attempts to revitalise the business have all led nowhere. Familiar brands such as Freeman Hardy Willis and Saxe have departed to be replaced by the uninspiring new concepts, Shoe Express and Shoe City. Nothing has worked — least of all last year's debacle of "the sale that wasn't a sale" to Stephen Hinchliffe's Facia Group. Yesterday's results showed British Shoe falling to a £9.1 million loss on sales of £465.4 million.

By Mr James's standards, British Shoe looks in robust financial health. Over the past ten

The appointment suggests the fundamental nature of BSC's problems, according to Paul Durman

years, he has been the banks' firefighter at a series of companies on the verge of collapse. His casebook includes Eagle Trust, the victim of an astonishingly brazen fraud; Dan-Air, the charter airline that failed to make it through the recession; and LEP Group, the freight distribution company crushed under a mountain of debt. As a council member of Lloyd's of London, he was at the heart of the rescue deal that secured a future for the insurance market.

Mr James's skills are slashing debts, cutting costs, making disposals and, with his lawyers,

chasing culprits who might be leant upon to hand back money. He cuts out the cancer, but is not a business builder. That Sears finds it necessary to turn to him underscores the fundamental nature of the problems at British Shoe.

Arguably Britain's foremost company doctor, Mr James loves the job, happily working punishing days of 16 hours or more. Each day starts at 5am with a three-mile run in Hyde Park. Unmarried at 59, his passions outside work are opera and cricket. He is chairman of the English Symphony Orchestra. His boast is that he

has never put a trading company into receivership. He and his team, who tend to move with him from one crisis to the next, claim to have saved 23,000 jobs over the past 14 years, and to have recovered £850 million of bank debt.

It is certainly the banks who have most to thank him for. Shareholders have often fared less well. Though LEP's businesses were saved, the parent company eventually went down with nothing for shareholders. Eagle Trust shareholders received only a token recovery of 1p a share. Mr James has previously complained that the days of the company doctor were ending, since banks no longer have the patience for protracted turnarounds. However, the increased activism among institutional shareholders — such as led to his appointment at Sears — has prompted him to revise his opinion.

NIESR calls for higher tax rather than rate rises

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

AN influential economic think-tank has called on the next Chancellor to raise taxes rather than interest rates to help to maintain a healthy economy.

The National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) gave warning that economic policy was becoming "unbalanced" with monetary policy too tight and fiscal policy too loose.

In its latest economic review NIESR argues that the high exchange rate is keeping the lid on inflation. But it adds that taxes will need to rise by about £3.5 billion to place government finances on a more sustainable basis.

The institute predicts that the strong pound, which has

risen by 15 per cent since last August, will restrict GDP growth to 2.5 per cent this year, well below the Treasury forecast of 3.5 per cent growth. The manufacturing sector will be especially hit with NIESR predicting it will grow just 2 per cent, compared with 7 per cent growth in the business services sector.

NIESR forecasts that inflation will end next year at 2.1 per cent, well below the 2.5 per cent target level adopted by both main parties.

NIESR is also more sanguine than many commentators about the tightening labour market. It believes that there is substantially more slack in the labour market

than in 1990 pointing to an increase in the size of the working population. The proportion of the potential workforce not employed is higher at 26 per cent, compared with 22 per cent in 1990.

But NIESR predicts that the next government will ignore its rate recommendations and raise rates by half a point. A separate report from the institute warns that the Government's balance sheet is worsening despite recent falls in borrowing. NIESR says that to place government finances on a sustainable basis the next Chancellor will need to stabilise the ratio of public sector net worth to GDP.

□ The number of company failures rose in the first three months of the year, although the underlying trend remains downwards. KPMG, the accountancy firm, recorded 340 receiverships between January and March, a 14.5 per cent increase on the three months to December when it recorded 297 failures. But KPMG said the number of receiverships had fallen by 25 per cent compared with the first quarter of 1996. Manufacturing companies accounted for third of all failures, with retail and finance 10 per cent and 12 per cent in construction.

Anthony Harris, page 33



Considering new debt: Stephen Davidson, chief executive

TeleWest to consider \$300m 'junk bond' debt

By ERIC REGULY

TELEWEST Communications, the second-largest cable company, is preparing to raise another \$300 million in "junk bond" debt. Analysts said the new debt is likely to be expensive and could trigger a slide in the share price.

Alan Lyons, analyst at Hoare Govett, said the prospect of another layer of debt has helped to push down the shares from about 120p in February to a recent low of 84p. The shares, issued at 182p in late 1994, closed at 90.5p, giving TeleWest a market capitalisation of £835 million.

Mr Lyons said the debt could carry interest charges as high as 13 per cent, compared to about 9 per cent for its existing £1.2 billion revolving credit facility. TeleWest, led by Stephen Davidson, chief executive, raised about \$1.2 billion in "junk bond" debt in 1995, when it purchased the rival SBC cable company.

Charles Burdick, finance director, would not comment on the new debt other than to say the company has made no firm commitment to proceed.

TeleWest would use the new funds to convert the networks to digital technology and order digital set-top boxes for cable TV customers.

Cable and Wireless Communications, the phone and cable company formed on Monday, would like to buy TeleWest through a share swap and wants to see the price come down.

British Steel cuts 400 jobs at tin-plate sites

BRITISH STEEL is to shed 400 more jobs in a cost-cutting move at its two tin-plate plants in South Wales. The redundancies were confirmed last night as part of a reorganisation after overcapacity in the tin-plate industry throughout Europe and the effects of the strong pound on export orders. The company said it was hoped that the job losses could be achieved voluntarily with union agreement.

About 150 posts will go at Ebbw Vale in the Gwent Valleys and at Trostre, Llanelli, in the next 12 months. The others will also be spread over the two plants between next year and March 1999. The job cuts are the first since British Steel announced a five-year restructuring programme to increase its competitiveness. Ebbw Vale and Trostre plants currently employ 3,000 people. British Steel shares remained unchanged at 144.5p.

Boeing's satellite link

BOEING, the US aircraft maker, is to build a \$9 billion network of several hundred low-orbit communications satellites as part of a partnership with Teledesic Inc, the communications company part-owned by Bill Gates, chairman of Microsoft. Boeing will also invest up to \$100 million in Teledesic, giving it a 10 per cent stake in the privately held company. Teledesic's other primary investor is Craig McCaw, builder of the world's largest cellular telephone company.

PepsiCo ahead 8%

PEPSICO, the American food and beverages company whose brands embrace Pizza Hut, KFC, Taco Bell and Frito Lay, lifted first-quarter earnings 8 per cent to \$427 million. Sales rose to \$6.7 billion from \$6.55 billion. Case sales of soft drinks grew 6 per cent, driven by double-digit volume growth for Mountain Dew and solid growth in Pepsi. But international sales were down 14 per cent. The restaurants businesses, which are to be divested, lifted profits 7 per cent.

Optometrics deal off

SHARES in Optometrics are expected to fall sharply today after the engineering group said yesterday that the previously announced deal for Peter Levine to buy 52.9 per cent of the shares had been called off. Mr Levine and other potential investors said they had halted plans after following due diligence procedures. Mr Levine had intended to become chairman. The Levine deal had been announced on April 14 at a share price of 16½p, against 23½p, up 1p, last night.

Seaboard cuts prices

SEABOARD, the electricity company serving two million customers in Kent, Sussex and Surrey, is cutting electricity prices from July 1. Typical annual bills will fall by about £10, while those paying by direct debit will save £14. Standing charges are being cut for the third year in a row, this time by around 25 per cent. At £3.26 a quarter, charges for standard domestic customers have been reduced by more than two thirds in the past five years, Seaboard said.

Guardian growth plan

GUARDIAN ROYAL EXCHANGE, the insurance group, said trading in the first three months of 1997 had been "satisfactory". Speaking to the company's annual meeting, Lord Hambro, chairman, said the group had a "clear strategy for the future". He confirmed that it intended to expand the life and health insurance business both organically and by acquisition, but stressed the company would not "be tempted to pay too much for any business".

Warning by Stylo

STYLO, the footwear and sportswear group that bought Hush Puppies from Sears in September, has said that it is unlikely to turn the acquisition into profit until August. The company, which expected Hush Puppies to be in the black from the offset, said serious supply problems had left the stores with a sharp deficit of stock. Together with the Saxe shoe stores, the two acquisitions made a £1.44 million loss. This forced overall pre-tax profits to £2.82 million (£3.88 million) and earnings to 3.5p a share (6.45p). The final dividend is held at 4.60p.

MAM's £250m of credit

MERCURY ASSET MANAGEMENT, the UK fund manager, has raised a £250 million line of credit for use in an emergency. The credit-raising exercise, which was led jointly by JP Morgan, the US securities house, and Royal Bank of Scotland was oversubscribed. In February, Hugh Stevenson, MAM chairman, said the credit line was a matter of "prudence" and was nothing to do with a rumoured share buyback after the company's financial year end on March 31.

Print chief makes £3m

TIMOTHY BRETTELL, founder and chairman of Access Plus, has raised £3 million after selling a third of his stake in the specialist printing company. Mr Brettell was joined by Nick Haigh and Chris Pope, finance director, who sold stakes worth £902,000 and £451,000 respectively. The shares were placed with institutions at 148p each, against the flotation price of 90p five months ago. Yesterday, the shares, which traded on the Alternative Investment Market, stayed at 155½p.

A&L sells estate agency

By ADAM JONES

ALLIANCE & Leicester yesterday announced the sale of its commercial estate agency business. Stiles Harold Williams, to a management buyout team for an initial £250,000.

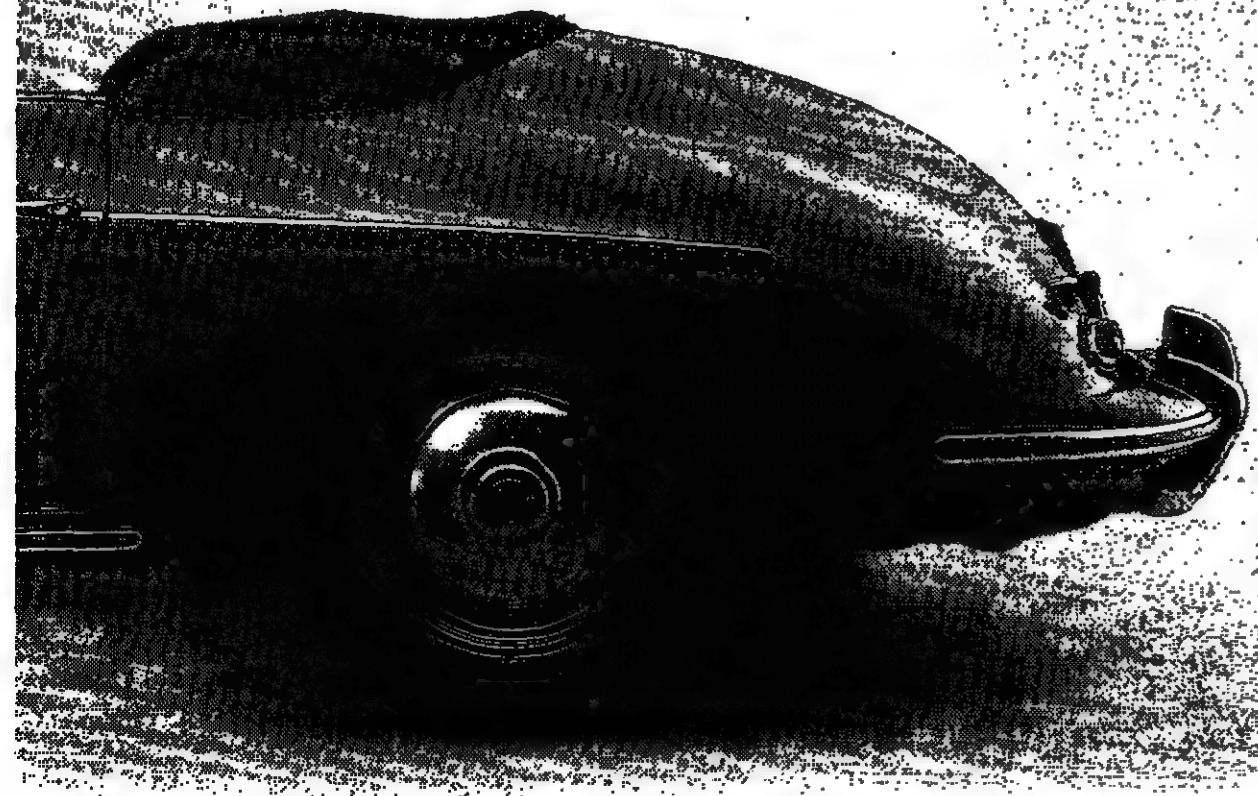
The sale represents the former building society's final withdrawal from estate agency, having written off £40 million for the

purpose in 1995. It will have no further effect on this year's results.

The buyout team comprises 14 senior staff, headed by Robert Stiles. The money was raised privately. An additional £25,000, or one third of post-tax profit, whichever is the higher, will also be paid to the bank for three years.

Anthony Harris, page 33

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Mellon to state view on Co-op row

By ROBERT MILLER, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

JIM MELLON, chairman of Regent Pacific, the Hong Kong fund manager that holds a near 4 per cent stake in the troubled Hambros, is expected to return to his assault on the banking group, and publicly state his forthright views on its role in the Co-op debacle, early next week.

Analysts in the City believe Monday's fulsome apology by Sir Chips Keswick, chairman of Hambros Bank, to the Co-operative Wholesale Society for its actions while working for Andrew Regan, the businessman who abandoned his bid for the Co-op last week, marks a watershed for the banking to estate agency group.

This week Mr Mellon, aged 40, who has in the past been a vociferous critic of the Hambros management, has been in "purdah" while he makes last-

minute presentations to institutional pension and life funds in the Crown Colony, the United States and Europe ahead of next Monday's partial flotation of Regent on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange. Fund managers attending the presentations say that Regent made an as yet unreported pre-tax profit in the year ending March 31 of \$US30 million, a 40 per cent rise on the previous year.

The Hong Kong listing will release about \$55 million and Mr Mellon is expected to use some of the funds to increase Regent's stake in Hambros. Profit forecasts for Hambros are around £7 million, better than the £12 million loss the previous year.

Tempus, page 32
 City Diary, page 33

Health insurance seen as a necessity within ten years

Survey reveals fears for NHS

By MARIANNE CURPHEY
 INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

DESPITE assurances from both major political parties, the vast majority of people believe the National Health Service will be dismantled within 50 years, according to a survey by Bupa, the UK's largest healthcare provider.

More than 70 per cent believe they will need private medical insurance within ten years and one third of the 2,000 people questioned thought emergency treatment in hospital would not be free within ten years. The study, commissioned for

Bupa's fiftieth anniversary, found that almost 70 per cent expected to have to meet the full cost of residential care for the elderly within a decade.

However, despite the concerns expressed by those who took part in the survey, there is no indication that demand for medical insurance is increasing. The number of people buying cover has increased by only 700,000 to 5.7 million over the past decade — an estimated 10 per cent of the population. This figure hides a boom in the 1980s and a decline during the recession of the early 1990s. Consumers have been discouraged by

the cost of comprehensive cover and poor publicity surrounding the industry as a whole. Last year the Office of Fair Trading criticised providers for not giving enough detail about policy cover, making comparisons difficult.

Medical insurance is widely perceived as expensive and premiums have been increasing. There have also been a number of disputes over the scope of insurance cover.

Bupa has 45 per cent of the market, down from its peak of 75 per cent in 1970s, while PPP has increased its market share by 4 per cent to 27 per cent.

TOURIST RATES			
Bank	Bank	Bank	Bank
Days	Sells	Days	Sells
Australia \$	2.19	Malta	0.080
Austria Sch	20.71	Netherlands Gld	3.341
Belgium Fr	83.98	New Zealand \$	2.40
Canada C	2.28	Norway Kr	12.05
Cyprus Cyp	0.875	Portugal Esc	282.50
Denmark Kr	11.24	S Africa Rd	7.50
Finland Mk	8.98	Spain Ps	247.50
France F	6.56	Sweden Kr	13.44
Germany Dm	2.90	Switzerland Fr	2.58
Greece Dr	2.73	Taiwan Nt	228.00
Hong Kong \$	13.31	USA \$	1.722
Iceland	127		
Ireland Pt	1.08		
Israel Sh	5.81		
Italy Lira	2295		
Japan Yen	218.70		

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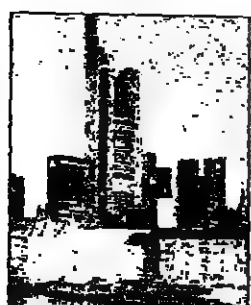
BA shares
 USAir sale

Saints c

INSIDE SECTION

2

TODAY



ARTS

The tower with its gardens on the inside
PAGES 37-39



HOMES

Lutyens gem a walk away from Westminster
PAGES 47



SPORT

Why football's star turns are facing life on the shelf
PAGES 48-56

TELEVISION AND RADIO PAGES 54, 55

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

WEDNESDAY APRIL 30 1997

SFO launches Regan inquiry

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM AND JASON NISSE

THE Serious Fraud Office has begun an investigation into the "Trellis" payment, the £2.4 million paid by a company controlled by Andrew Regan in 1995 to extend a £25 million-a-year contract with the Co-operative Wholesale Society.

The inquiry is a further blow to Mr Regan, who was forced last week to abandon plans to bid for CWS and who now faces civil and private criminal prosecution by CWS. Mr Regan has this week lost the services of Hambros, his bank, and Travers Smith, his solicitor, both of whom have apologised and paid substantial damages to CWS. The SFO will look at the circumstances surrounding the extension of a contract for Hobson, a food manufacturer then run by Mr Regan, to

supply the CWS. As part of the deal, a £2.4 million payment was made to Trellis International, a British Virgin Islands company controlled by Ronald Zimet, an Anglo-Israeli businessman.

Mr Zimet resigned as chairman of Freepages, the AIM-listed group, on Monday but retains a 22 per cent stake in the group, worth £30 million.

In a letter to Mr Regan

dated April 23, Graham Melmoth, chief executive of CWS, wrote: "Mr Zimet got his instructions from you late on 19th January [1995]. Then, miraculously, only three working days later, Mr Zimet announces that he has overcome the intractable negotiating problem which you say you faced. The deal is then done within hours and you pay him £2.4 million. I find

that extraordinary. What did Mr Zimet do to earn £2.4 million in three days?"

Hobson was subsequently bought by Hillsdown Holdings, the food group, which passed all files relating to the deal to CWS two weeks ago. These documents were then handed over to the SFO by CWS lawyers. CWS and Hillsdown have said yesterday that they would co-operate

fully with the SFO. Neither Mr Regan nor his business partner David Lyons, nor anyone else at Latica Trust, the investment company run by Mr Regan, or at Galileo, the company set up to make the CWS bid, were available to comment.

SBC Warburg, the merchant bank that then advised Hobson, said it was not aware of the payment when it was

made in January 1995, learning of it two months later. It resigned shortly afterwards.

Peter Large, the director in charge of the Hobson account, subsequently left to join Hambros, where he advised first Hobson and later Mr Regan's Galileo consortium on its approach to CWS.

KPMG, Hobson's auditor, said it was given assurances about the payment so that it

could sign off the Hobson accounts for 1995. Dobb Lupton Alsop, Hobson's then lawyers, declined to comment.

The SFO will be conducting the inquiry with the Greater Manchester Police and the Metropolitan Police Fraud Squad. The SFO, which said that no arrests had been made, took up the case after the alleged fraud was outlined to it last Tuesday by Linklaters & Paines, solicitors to CWS.

Although it is unusual for the SFO to take on a case involving a sum as low as £2.4 million, it is believed that the case does fit all the main SFO criteria. It is complex, and has an international scope. Also, the SFO is able to obtain interviews under compulsion, which cannot then be used as evidence in a criminal prosecution. This means that the banks and solicitors involved in the negotiations can co-operate.

NOMURA CAN STILL BANK ON CO-OPERATION FROM CRS

By JASON NISSE

NOMURA Bank International, whose sister company was set to finance Galileo's bid for the Co-operative Wholesale Society, is to remain as a banker to the co-operative movement after giving assurances that it had not passed on any confidential information.

Co-operative Retail Services, which

has three directors in common with CWS, is set to borrow up to £15 million from Nomura as part of its financing needs this year and met the bank on Monday. Nomura explained that the role of its sister company, Nomura International, in backing Galileo's bid was a commercial deal and that no confidential information given to it by CRS has been seen by the team working on the CWS deal.

Harry Moore, CRS chief executive, said yesterday he had met Andrew Regan to discuss the Galileo bid a couple of weeks ago, but had told Mr Regan he could not support his bid for CWS. Mr Moore attacked the CWS for not being willing to put the Galileo offer to its members and added: "If Andrew Regan and this bid has woken up the co-operative movement to radical change we can only applaud this."

CRS tried four times in the past 12 years to persuade the CWS to merge with it, but is now not keen on a merger.

Mr Moore admitted CRS's results were poor. In the year to January 25 it made a pre-tax loss of £13.8 million compared with a profit of £13.7 million the previous year. Mr Moore's salary, however, rose by £9,000 to £277,000. Mellon's view, page 30; Pennington 31

Strong in line for £500,000 payoff

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

LIAM STRONG, chief executive of Sears, is set to receive a payoff of up to £500,000 when he leaves the company in June. Mr Strong, who has faced mounting pressure to resign during the past 18 months, is on a two-year contract and was paid £412,000 last year. He will receive a year's salary plus some pension contributions when he leaves, the company said yesterday.

Sears confirmed that, after repeated delays, it is to sell Freemans, its mail-order arm, to Littlewoods. The price is £367.5 million, but Sears is expected to net only £318 million from the deal, which is subject to Monopolies and Mergers Commission approval. The cash will go towards a £370 million special dividend (equivalent to 24p a share) at the end of this year. Investors were originally promised £410 million.

Selfridges is to be spun off and analysts estimate that it will be worth about £580 million as a standalone business.

David James, a leading company doctor, has been brought in as executive chairman of the struggling British Shoe Corporation. Sir Bob Reid, chairman of Sears, said several buyers have been sniffing around each of the four British Shoe chains. Dolcis and Cable & Co may be retained as part of the clothing business which will form the core of the new Sears.

Mr James says the main problem is with Shoe Express. The management at Shoe City has convinced him they believe in the brand's possibilities but claim it suffered from being restricted to a narrow range. He said "I have to act fast." He described BSC as "a painful boil which has to be lanced."

Sir Bob said Sears may sell majority stakes in some of the shoe businesses, but keep a

minority share. No closures are expected by the company. Mr Strong said the shoe business had property worth £80 million, meaning that the maximum write-off that may arise would be £120 million.

Mr Strong, who has been chief executive for five years, delivered his last set of group results yesterday. In the year to January 31, Sears made a pre-tax profit of £68.1 million against a loss of £119.7 million a year ago. The final dividend stays at 2.9p. The total remains at 3.95p.

Sir Bob said the current low Sears share price reflected an undervaluation of the assets. The shares were unchanged yesterday at 77.1p. Sean Eddie, retail analyst at NatWest Markets, said the restructuring looked complex and "not been fully thought out."

Company doctor, page 30
Pennington, page 31



Liam Strong, left, awaits a payoff from Sir Bob Reid after his long-awaited departure

Five years on, and chief finally concedes defeat

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

WHEN Liam Strong delivered the Sears year-end results for 1992, his first year in charge, he said his main task was to turn around British Shoe Corporation. He has said essentially the same thing every year since. Finally, as he prepared to leave the group yesterday, he admitted that he had failed.

"I've failed to extract value from the shoe business," he conceded. However, he still insisted: "We've succeeded in creating two excellent busi-

nesses in clothing and Selfridges."

Judgment in the City was less generous. "He was clearly the wrong man when he was brought in to do the job," one institutional shareholder said. "Compare Sears with what has happened at Burton under new management."

Mr Strong was brought in from British Airways in 1992 to shake up the sprawling business. He sold off the shoe factories, along with Galilford housebuilding, Finsters and

Your Price menswear. More recently, Olympus Sports and Hush Puppy shoes have been sold. In 1994 he felt confident enough to say "We are no longer in the recovery phase." He spoke too soon. In 1995, Sears made a pre-tax loss of £119.7 million. This year has also been grim. Sir Bob Reid, chairman, supported Mr Strong to the last and paid tribute to him yesterday. His was a lone voice.

City Diary, page 33

APV may be bid target

By OLIVER AUGUST

A STOCK EXCHANGE inquiry is likely after heavy trading in shares in APV yesterday ahead of the company's disclosure of a bid approach.

Almost 15 million shares were traded yesterday afternoon. The normal turnover of APV shares is between one and two million shares per day. The shares rose from 60p to 71p, valuing the business at £211 million.

In a brief statement the company, which manufactures equipment for the food and drinks industry, said: "The board has received an indication of interest which may result in an offer being made for the company. It is not clear at this stage whether this approach will or will not lead to an offer being made."

APV said it "will keep shareholders informed of developments". The group and its advisers refused to further comment after the announcement.

APV has suffered a prolonged period of under-performance despite extensive restructuring. *Tempos, page 32*

Carlton talks to BT on digital TV link

By ERIC REGULY

A GROUP led by Carlton Communications has opened negotiations with BT to form an alliance to launch digital TV in terrestrial form.

The move is part of BT's effort to become a significant player in the digital broadcasting business, which will give viewers the choice of more than 200 channels when it is launched by early 1998.

Carlton and its partners in the British Digital Broadcasting (BDB) consortium have asked BT to devise ways to make the BDB set-top boxes interactive, allowing services such as home banking and shopping. BT would share in the revenue generated by these services in exchange for subsidising their retail price.

BDB's shareholders are Carlton, Granada and BSkyB, the satellite broadcaster 40 per

cent owned by News International, owner of The Times. BDB will learn next month whether it has won the licence to start digital terrestrial TV. Its only rival is the Digital Television Network, led by International CableTel, the US cable group.

BT is forming a parallel alliance to help BSkyB to launch digital satellite TV. BT and its partners - Matsushita, owner of the Panasonic electronics brand, and Midland Bank - have tentatively agreed to become shareholders in the Interactive Services Company (Isco), which will spend about £500 million to subsidise the prices of BSkyB's digital set-top boxes.

The talks to form Isco are said to be complete. BSkyB and BT plan to announce the company after the election.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES
FTSE 100 4432.2 (+43.3)
Yield 3.92%
FTSE All share 2134.88 (+16.28)
Nikkei Closed
New York
Dow Jones 6992.60 (+109.58)
S&P Composite 796.71 (+13.75)

US RATE
Federal Funds 5 1/4% (5 1/4%)
Long Bond 8 5/8% (8 5/8%)
Yield 7.01% (7.11%)

LONDON MONEY
3-mth interbank 8 1/4% (8 1/4%)
Long term gilts 10 1/2% (10 1/2%)
Future (Jun)

STERLING
New York 1.8320* (1.8247)
London 1.8313 (1.8234)
DM 2.8129 (2.8040)
FF 6.4873 (6.4551)
SF 2.3828 (2.3862)
Yen 126.53* (126.85)
£ Index 100.5 (99.9)

US DOLLAR
New York 1.7948* (1.7925)
London 1.7948 (1.7905)
DM 5.8160* (5.8400)
FF 1.4660* (1.4735)
Yen 126.53* (126.85)
£ Index 100.5 (99.9)

Tokyo close Yen 126.73

NORTH SEA OIL
Brent 15-day (Jul) \$18.85 (\$18.29)

GOLD
London close \$339.86 (\$340.05)

* denotes midday trading price

Tax rises
The National Institute of Economic and Social Research is calling upon the next Chancellor to raise taxes, instead of raising interest rates. Economists believe monetary policy is too tight but that fiscal policy is too slack. Page 30

Rising losses
Losses at Euro Disney, the theme park operator, increased in the first half of 1997 after a rise in interest payments. Page 31

US data helps to restore FT-SE

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

THE London markets showed no signs of pre-election nerves yesterday as the pound and the FT-SE 100 index climbed back towards recent highs.

The index closed up 43.5 points at 4,433.2, just 11 points shy of its record, after weaker than expected US employment data calmed fears that interest rates would rise later this month in America.

The US data also pushed the pound higher against the dollar, closing up nearly a cent at \$1.6310. Sterling gained nearly a penny against the mark to finish trading at DM2.8127. The pound's trade-weighted index climbed from 99.3 to 100.3.

Traders said the lack of concern about the expected Labour victory was surprising

given the party's historically unhappy relationship with the markets and that a substantial Labour victory was already discounted in the price of shares and sterling. The only outcome likely to upset the market on Friday morning would be a hung Parliament which could result in a big sell-off by foreign investors worried by a period of political uncertainty.

The market was also untroubled by the latest consumer credit figures which showed growth slowing in March. Total net lending fell from £3.06 billion in February to £2.55 billion last month - the lowest level for nearly a year.

Consumer credit fell from a record £1.2 billion in February to £780 million, while

mortgage lending was also weaker than in recent months, falling to £1.77 billion from £1.87 billion in February. The credit card element of lending also slipped to £205 million (£240 million). Economists said the fall reflected credit card repayment after heavy borrowing in February.

Adam Cole, UK economist at HSBC James Capel, said that the consumer credit figures are likely to slow further after windfall gains and stronger income growth. But separate figures from the British Bankers' Association showed quarterly growth in bank lending at a record £11.4 billion.

Pennington, page 31

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How long will benefits last as US bids farewell to welfare?

Bronwen

Maddox

looks at

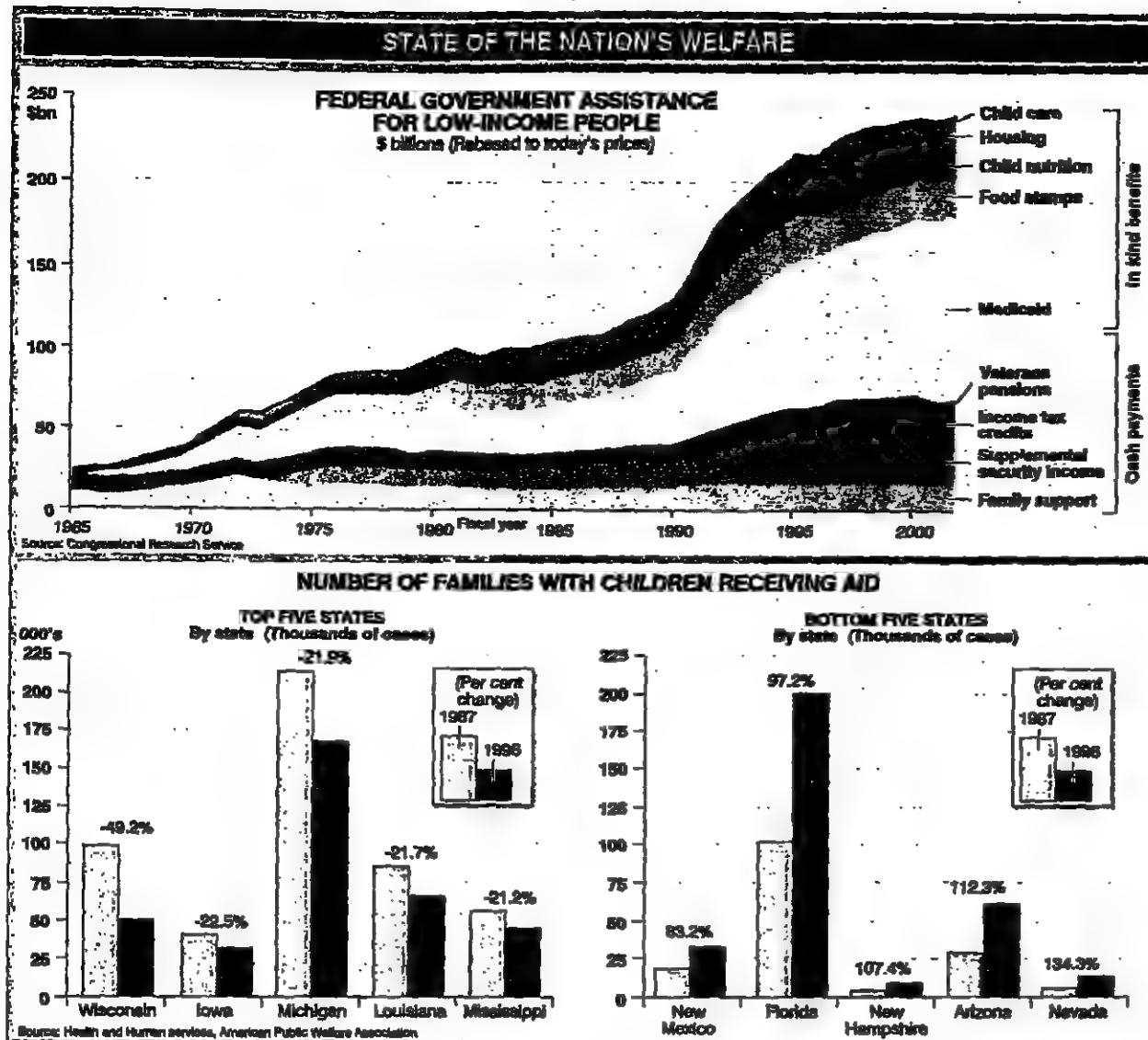
America's
biggest social
experiment

On Friday, Washington will unveil its latest memorial: a monument to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, inscribed with the 1933 speech in which he offered the United States a "New Deal", including a safety net for its poorest citizens. The tributes do not mention that the US, in one of its most radical social experiments for decades, is now overhauling Roosevelt's legacy with a comprehensive programme of welfare reform.

Whichever party wins the British election tomorrow, it will look closely at the results emerging from the transatlantic laboratory. Both Labour and Conservatives have promised to reform welfare and help the long-term unemployed back to work. Yet so far, each has stopped short of America's bluntness: cutting off benefits for those who do not find jobs.

In signing, last August, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act, which was drawn up by the Republican-controlled Congress, President Clinton promised to "end welfare as we know it". For the first time, the new law set absolute limits on the benefits that a person could receive in a lifetime. States must withdraw benefits from adults who do not start work within two years. Federal cash cannot be paid to families headed by someone on benefits for five years or more.

The move was driven partly by economic concerns. As the non-partisan Congressional Research Service notes (see chart), Federal Government spending on means-tested benefits has risen for three decades. The cuts represented by last year's legislation have only partly slowed the increase because of the swelling cost of medical care for the poor. But the political moves were driven by a change in public attitudes. It has become common for women with



children to work, while Americans have become less tolerant of single mothers who rely on welfare to raise their children. And whereas many welfare programmes were originally targeted at widows and their children, they now support unmarried mothers, who enjoy far less public sympathy.

But will the dozens of different experiments underway across the US work? The definition of success is itself open to debate. To many conservatives, the reforms are justified simply if they cut federal and state spending. To liberals and some moderates, they are successful only if they also improve the long-term welfare of the poor.

Wisconsin is often lauded as the blueprint for success. Tommy Thompson, the Republican Governor who campaigned

successfully in 1986 on a platform of welfare reform, blames "classic liberal mistakes" for the leap in its welfare rolls in the early 1980s. People would move to Wisconsin from other states to sign on for its generous benefits, he says, while billboards on the border with Illinois read "Will the last business to leave Wisconsin please turn out the lights".

Under Mr Thompson's schemes, which began years before Mr Clinton's legislation, parents see their benefits cut unless they do some work and make sure that children up to the age of 18 attend school. Since January 1987, Wisconsin has seen the number of families with children receiving aid fall 49 per cent, higher than any other state. This autumn, Wisconsin plans to go further, by

limiting an adult to a maximum five years of benefit (in some cases only two years of support) over his or her whole life. Wisconsin makes no exceptions for mental or physical handicap; it also plans to make new mothers do some work as soon as the baby is three months old. "Welfare takes away your vision, your optimism, your ability to think of your self-worth," Mr Thompson says. "I want to eliminate it completely."

In a lecture hall in a classroom in Milwaukee, the state capital, the implications of Mr Thompson's moral crusade are being hammered home to 18 welfare recipients, all but one of them black, all but three of them women, most with small children. "Do not put President of a bank under desired job," insists Jerine Irvan, the job-

search teacher. "Do not put 'Owner of my own shopping mall'. Do not put 'Airline pilot' as someone did last week." To a protest from a young black man that he had always wanted to be a pilot, she retorts: "Airline pilot is very short time to find a job." Wisconsin, with excellent public schools, strong economy and falling unemployment (at 3.5 per cent), has found it easier than many other states to cut welfare rolls. But part of the reason for the rapid fall in the caseload comes from the recognition, as Mr Thompson puts it, that "you can't do it on the cheap". The state's spending on providing childcare, to overcome one of the main barriers single mothers face in going back to work, will have risen from \$125 million in 1987 to

\$180 million by next year. It also pays \$25 a month to those on the job search programme, helps them find presentable clothes for interviews and gives employers training subsidies of \$300 a month.

Despite these costs, says Mr Thompson, the state is in profit from the changes. A decade ago, it spent \$46 million a month on aid to families with children; now it spends \$21 million. On his estimates, after allowing for extra spending, the programmes have saved \$1 billion in a decade, split roughly 50:50 between the State and the Federal Government.

Welfare experts agree that mandatory job search projects such as that in Wisconsin — also tried in Arkansas and California — can help a large proportion of welfare recipients find work quickly. Gary Burtless, a senior fellow of the Brookings Institution in Washington DC, says such schemes add to work experience, and so may help people achieve steady rises in income.

However, critics charge that Wisconsin has not addressed the bold fact that some people are incapable of steady work. Social workers in Milwaukee say the programme is poorly equipped to deal with those who are highly antisocial or disruptive, if not actually mentally ill. A study by the University of Wisconsin, which called the reforms "a leap into the unknown", said the long-term effects of leaving so many young children in state-run childcare could be worrying.

From his own 12-year study of single mothers, Mr Burtless says that for a minority — he estimates a quarter — strict time limits "would probably mean that they could no longer support their children at all" and "could cause highly visible hardship and even homelessness". He concludes: "Unfortunately, the earnings capacity of most women who collect welfare is limited. Any humane and effective reform plan must take this unpleasant fact into account."

Those criticisms are rejected by Wisconsin's Governor, who is adamant about sticking to his principle that everyone is capable of work. But although those charges cannot be properly assessed for several years, they do at least delineate the formidable gamble that ambitious welfare reform programmes are taking.

It is, first of all, a gamble on the economy: that growth will continue, and that the private sector will continue to need unskilled workers. Recession could make an immediate and painful dent in the project, shaking out people who had been shoe-horned into minimum-wage jobs during prosperity. Second, it is a gamble on changing human behaviour in the long-term: that strict time limits will deter young girls from having families, and encourage them to acquire skills instead.

The risk of bringing about welfare changes is that the poorest and least capable may suffer extreme hardship. That price will not be clear until the guillotine of time limits has finally cut off benefits from long-term recipients. The problem that may then confront politicians is whether voters, however pleased at the shrinking welfare rolls, will want to see the painful consequences of that social reform on their streets.

IAN BRODIE

A golden rule that might make sense

Dean Trench Street, one of the modest canonical roads leading to Smith Square in Westminster, is not the sort of place you would look for a bomb factory. But it is the home of the National Institute for Economic and Social Research, and the latest NIESR quarterly review, contains one table with a potential explosive force. It is called the public sector balance sheet. It explains why our taxes are still too low, despite 22 increases. It blows apart a lot of hollowed lions: the Maastricht criteria, our own medium-term financial strategy, and Gordon Brown's golden rule. Not to mention any Conservative pretensions to good stewardship.

The public sector what, you may be asking? The fact is that we have not seen such a thing before, and the thought makes me kick myself. No financial journalist would give an ounce of credence to a company report which gave no figures for the capital position: accountants, after all, define profit as the difference between the opening and closing balance. But when it comes to UK Pte, different rules have been applied. A decade in the public capital position has been brushed under the rug, but not one awkward question has been raised since Harold Macmillan protested against the selling of the family silver. The more fools the rest of us.

What the table shows is that in John Major's six years, first as Chancellor and then as Prime Minister, the net worth of the public sector — its assets less its debts — has been run down by four fifths, or about £200 billion in current prices. That is a loss of wealth of nearly £10,000 for every household in the country. Perhaps voters are better economists than the experts. What we have lost is not wealth that we can mortgage, but no less valuable — hospitals with enough beds, decent schools, good roads, adequate police equipment — you name it.

It hurts, and it saddles us with higher spending on private provision, on maintenance, on improvements, a bigger national debt, and about 2p on income tax for

ever, simply to stop the debauchery going on. But the Treasury is not the only body that needs reminding about balance sheets. The figures show up the real cost of using the proceeds of privatisation to pay for current spending (favoured by the IMF). They also show that "solutions" such as the Private Finance Initiative solve nothing. Borrowing is not itself a sin, whether you are a government or a company. The choice between private and public finance, the Institute argues, should not be based on its impact on the PSBR (a Thatcherite cash flow number), but on cost, just like the choice between investing or buying in. Is leasing cheaper than borrowing? Common sense, surely, and once you have understood that, you will also understand that the Maastricht constraints on public borrowing are equally empty. Bond issuance is one aspect of economic management, not its acid test.

So what does make sense? An annual official public balance sheet would complete the budget accounts, and show up debauchery; but we still need a guide to sound policy. The Institute proposes a definition of a neutral policy: one which stabilises the publicly owned share of national wealth. More loans left, less loans right: the arguments are doctrinal, not economic. In a sense this is what Gordon Brown probably had at the back of his mind when he proposed his golden rule, no extra borrowing except for investment: but that is incomplete. It still emphasises borrowing, simply one method of financing, rather than real impacts, as the test of virtue. Bad accounting again.

So should the next government simply tear up the existing rule book? Ideally, yes, but the shock effect would be too great. A more modest hope: that the Treasury and the next Chancellor will read the Review, and that the next Red Book contains at least a mention of the public sector balance sheet.

British companies are said to be too much dominated by accountants. Could they export some to our biggest financial concerns?

Here's to you, Ms Robinson

Charlotte Robinson had been strung out on crack for four days when she tried to buy more. The deal turned ugly. She was robbed and beaten up, losing her front teeth. When she came to, she realised she could not sink any lower. She had been addicted for ten years. She was a single mother of three, homeless and entirely dependent on a welfare handout of \$320 a month.

Today, Ms Robinson is a success story, thanks to her own determination and America's most innovative private sector welfare-to-work scheme, pioneered by Marriott International Inc.

She has a full-time job with Marriott as a chambermaid. She has stayed off drugs for a year and has moved into a flat with her infant daughter. She hopes her two other children, now with her mother, can join her. She is saving up for

appliances, her own furniture and a car. It has been a struggle for her — and for Marriott, whose task of rehabilitating welfare recipients is both daunting and rewarding. The model may be the future for companies that need low-wage workers.

Marriott's programme is expanding from 16 to 22 cities and guarantees a job to those who stay the course. Some 650 have undergone six weeks of unpaid, on-the-job training, plus classes that bolster pride and teach basic coping skills such as opening a bank account and finding a place to live. Putting a trainee through the course costs \$5,000, half of that state-funded. Marriott chooses only the best: one in four who apply are taken on. Nearly 80 per cent keep their jobs with Marriott for more than a year, well above average for hotel industry workers. The longer they stay, the

better for Marriott, but the company insists that it counts the social benefits and does not track the programme as a profit centre. The Marriott family are Mormons and J. Willard Marriott Jr., chairman and son of the founder, has said that unless companies invest in America's decaying inner cities, the poverty trap will remain in place.

CASE STUDY

Others may be less altruistic but interest in welfare-to-work is growing. Sixty-three organisations and companies have just attended a seminar to learn how Marriott does it.

Each course demands countless extra hours of nurturing by Marriott's personnel staff. They hunt down absentees and drive them to class, go shopping with train-

ees for clothes, haggle with landlords, negotiate with case workers and even sort out family fights. Janet Tully, programme director, says that many welfare recipients are keen to work but have no idea how to operate within the system and tend to blame others for their troubles.

Ms Robinson was among 12 trainees from Washington, all homeless and black, who celebrated completion of their course at a euphoric awards ceremony. The graduates offered inspirational songs, poems and speeches. Ms Robinson moved her classmates to tears when she declared: "I'm not the woman I could have been or should be, but thank God I'm not the woman I used to be."

Another graduate, an energetic woman in a vivid orange dress, led a chant of Jesse Jackson's mantra of self-esteem: "I am Somebody." She

vowed she would never again be controlled by the man who had once kidnapped her baby. Later, reality set in: two women on the course were serial trainees, it seemed, signing on for courses but never holding down a job. The woman in the orange dress had been absent for several weeks from her job as a chambermaid, saying her daughter had chicken-pox — and raising fears that she was again being abused by her boyfriend.

Marriott draws criticism from trade union leaders for resisting attempts to unionise its workers and for not paying higher wages. In fact, Marriott's median rate of \$7.40 an hour is above the pay of nearly a third of US workers. In addition, Marriott offers stock options, classes on parenting and day care.

IAN BRODIE

Sole searching

LIAM STRONG was putting on a brave face yesterday, despite having to give his many critics the satisfaction of seeing him finally throw in the towel. After parting company with Sears he plans to go sailing for the summer.

He will then consider the "range of options" he says he has open to him. "I am probably not going to go into another shoe business," Strong said, with admirable presence.



"I never thought I'd say it but I'd love to be in his shoes"

● A COMMUNIQUE arrives from Johannesburg solicitors Bell, Dewar & Hall bearing the firm's motto: "Lawyers adding value through expertise." Apparently in South Africa there is no Trades Descriptions Act.

Hands' length

NOMURA BANK director Michael Cooke was faced with an embarrassing situation on Monday when he turned up for a meeting of the lending group to the Co-operative Retail Society. CRS may be at daggers drawn with the Co-operative Wholesale Society, but Cooke was at pains to distance himself from Guy Hands, the corporate financier at Nomura International, who was helping Andrew Regan put together the finance for the abortive bid for the CWS.

Neil Pringle, the CRS's urban financial controller, accepted the apology with equanimity. "The bank said it had not talked to the corporate finance side. There are Japanese walls apparently."

Tiger chasing

JIM MELLON, the stalker of Hambros Bank, is no stranger to risk. The



globe-trotting head of Regent Pacific, the Hong Kong-based fund manager, cut his teeth in the emerging Tiger markets of South-East Asia under the auspices of Richard Thornton's eponymous group. He was there when the 1987 crash wreaked havoc in the region. Now he is back with his own company and thriving in the new Tiger economies of Eastern Europe as well as holding a near 4 per cent stake in Hambros Bank. The Regent portfolio is not for the faint-hearted so nice to see such august bodies as the President and Fellows of Harvard College and our own Equitable Life backing him.

● A READER calls to point out that the cultural departments of the US

and Russian embassies can only be called on premium-rate phone lines. Who knows what great insights you can get at 45p per minute?

Riding high

THE latest IRA campaign has halted planes, trains and automobiles but not determined executives. Rupert Lowe and Andrew Cowen, chairman and managing director of Southampton Leisure, got stuck in an impossible traffic jam on the M3 yesterday caused by the latest round of bomb threats. Fortunately, they were able to turn back to Mr Cowen's house and beat the traffic by both riding to their meeting at the Dell, home of Southampton Football Club, on Mr Cowen's pride and joy — a BMW 1,000cc motorbike.

● A SPOT of wishful thinking from the fax machines at Tory Central Office? A press release winging its way from Conservative HQ was mysteriously dated 1992. Nostalgic memories of the last election victory must be permeating the air.

Reading rescue

ALAN LEWIS is clearly enjoying himself as receiver of AFC Bournemouth, the second division football club. The Arthur Andersen partner, a veteran of the Gooda Walker, Coal Investments and Maxwell insolvencies, has done

everything but play in goal in his attempts to save The Cherries.

He offered to compete in a penalty shoot-out against Trevor Watkins, the lawyer from Hammond Sudards who runs the Bournemouth Trust Fund, and a representative of the supporters club, to raise money for the club. But a downpour washed out the competition last weekend.

Now Reading, where multimillionaire publisher John Madejski is about to build a £37 million "Madejski" stadium, is coming to the rescue. It is playing a charity game against Bournemouth a week today at the end of which the shoot-out will reconvene. Weather permitting.



John Madejski will see his team come to the rescue of a rival

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Irish boom economy expected to continue

FROM EILEEN McCABE IN DUBLIN

THE Republic of Ireland's booming economy is set to continue to outstrip its European neighbours until 2005, the country's leading economic think-tank has said.

In a report published today the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) predicts GNP growth of 5.5 per cent for the remainder of the 1990s, slowing to 5 per cent through to 2005.

The independent group says that such growth will fuel a sharp fall in unemployment from its current rate of around 11 per cent to just 7 per cent by 2005 and that Ireland will achieve the EU average standard of living within the next eight years. The authors conclude: "The long-standing cliché of Ireland as a small vulnerable economy on the periphery of Europe is already looking a little threadbare."

The Medium Term Review says the cornerstone of Ireland's economic success was

laid in the late 1960s when the Government introduced free secondary level education — a full 20 years after most other European countries. However, unlike some, Ireland continued to make education a priority. Today, almost 50 per cent of those leaving the education system do so after tertiary training. More than 80 per cent stay in schools at least until Leaving Certificate (A levels) standard, giving a higher rate of participation in education than in Britain.

The authors say these developments have interacted with and influenced such fundamental areas as the skill levels of the workforce, female participation in the Labour market and emigration.

The latter area has shown the most dramatic improvement. Back in 1950 almost one third of the country's potential labour market entrants emigrated in search of employment. Today the exceptional performance of the economy has resulted in net immigration. This in turn is set to cut the dependence/workers ratio from one of the highest in Europe in the Eighties to one of the lowest by 2005.

The ESRI cites tight fiscal controls, moderate pay demands and national wage agreements as key instruments of growth. It says that more of the same is required in the next decade if growth is to be sustained.

"The biggest danger is that an excessive rise in expectation could feed into wage inflation or on supportable demands on the Executive," says the report. However, it should be possible, says the report, to eliminate new government borrowing in the next three years and to run a small surplus by 2005.

The predictions are based on the presumption that EMU will go ahead on January 1, 1999, and that the Republic will be a founding member.



Patrick Coyle, left, chief executive, and Conor McCarthy, retiring chairman and chief executive, yesterday

Ryan races ahead after revamp

A MULTIMILLION-POUND refurbishment programme last year helped to boost profits 45 per cent at Ryan Hotels, one of the Republic of Ireland's leading chains (Eileen McCabe writes). The group, which has hotels throughout Ireland and three outlets on the Conti-

nent, yesterday reported pre-tax profits of £14.04 million. Earnings grew 43 per cent to £15.25p a share. Over the past four years, Ryan has spent £18 million updating many of its leading hotels in Ireland. Yesterday, it announced a 100-bedroom extension to the Gresham

Hotel, the group's Dublin flagship. It also said that, as expected, Conor McCarthy would be stepping down as chief executive, but would remain as non-executive chairman. There is a final dividend of £1.25p, payable on August 7, giving a total of £1.87p (£1.5p).

Watmoughs shares tumble after second profit warning

BY MARTIN BARROW

SHARES in Watmoughs (Holdings) fell 24.3 per cent after the printing group issued its second profit warning in just six weeks. Patrick Walker, chairman, told the company's annual meeting that underlying profits in the first half would fall short of last year's interim profits.

He said the difficult trading conditions in Britain in the final quarter of last year had continued in the first three months of the current year, although there is now evidence that the market for high-quality web offset is improving.

UK gravure operations are suffering from the strength of the pound, which is affecting exports and the non-contractual gravure business, which competes in a European market. This is being compounded by the price of paper being cheaper in continental Europe than in Britain. Markets for financial printing and packing remain very competitive, the company said.

Operations in Spain and Hungary are progressing in line with expectations in local currency terms, although these are suffering on translation into sterling. The disclosure that first-half profits would fall below last year's comparable £9.6 million stunned the stock market, and the shares fell 87p to 272p, wiping more than £58 million from the company's market value, to £188.7 million.

A year ago the shares traded at 480p. In March they fell 28p to 407p after the company reported a fall in pre-tax profits to £22.2 million (£23.7 million). Analysts believe current-year profits are unlikely to exceed £26 million and pressure is growing on Declan Salter, chief executive, to reassure investors that the company can recover.

Latin America was the fastest growing region, with total sales up by almost 30 per cent. Brazil ended the year as the sixth largest music market in the world, showing an increase of sales of 33 per cent. Growth in Columbia exceeded 30 per cent despite prolonged economic problems. The IFPI said at a seminar held during London's Music Week.

In 1996, around 70 per cent of the world's music growth was generated in less developed markets, in particular from Latin America and Asia. This compared with only 20 per cent in 1993, when global growth was at a similar level to 1996, the industry body said.

In Asia, growth of 9 per cent was at its highest for some years. Malaysia, Taiwan and Thailand all had sales growth of more than 20 per cent. Europe retained its position as the largest region for music sales, with 34 per cent of world total, the IFPI said.

In Britain, sales grew by 7 per cent. Among medium-sized markets, Denmark and Portugal both showed growth in sales of more than 15 per cent. In eastern Europe, sales grew by 14 per cent overall, with CD sales increasing by almost 30 per cent and cassette sales up by more than 10 per cent.

Kuoni also cautioned that alongside uncertainty factors tied to currencies and securities markets, as well as short-term bookings, it has 50 per cent of its fixed costs in the first half, but realises only 10 to 20 per cent of its operating earnings in that period.

The majority of operating results are seen in the summer and autumn vacation period, which falls in the second half.

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Latins lead in \$40bn market for music

BY A CORRESPONDENT

THE overall volume of global music sales grew by 4 per cent last year, totalling four billion units worth \$39.8 billion, the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) said yesterday. The fastest growing region of the world was Latin America.

The industry group said compact disc sales grew by 9 per cent, while both cassette and vinyl LP sales fell by 1 per cent and 32 per cent respectively. But the singles market experienced continued growth, with an 8 per cent increase in sales.

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BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Burford acquires retail parks for £65m

BURFORD HOLDINGS has agreed to acquire four retail warehouse parks from Morrison Construction Group for £65.5 million. Burford said the parks in Edinburgh, Stoke-on-Trent, Hull and Walsall comprise approximately 450,000 sq ft of lettable retail warehouse accommodation. Only Meadowbank in Edinburgh, comprising 135,000 sq ft, has been developed so far, while planning consent has been granted for development of the three other sites. Construction is expected to proceed shortly.

The company said it will be making stage payments as pre-determined lettings are achieved. Overall, the price reflects an average yield of 7.8 per cent, based on an average rent of £11.50 per sq ft. John Anderson, property director at Burford Holdings, said: "This deal provides us with an excellent yield off a low average base rent and will provide good returns for Burford shareholders in the short to medium term."

Tate & Lyle investment

TATE & LYLE, the UK sugar company, has invested £4.1 million from its existing cash resources for a 50 per cent stake in a new sugar plant in India. Tate & Lyle's partner in this venture is Simbhaoli Sugar Mills. The plant at Chitwaria, about 300 miles east of Delhi, began production in February. The factory has been designed for easy and low-cost expansion in the medium term to 120,000 tonnes of sugar a year and an eventual capacity of more than 300,000 tonnes a year.

Zeneca collaboration

ZENECA GROUP, the pharmaceuticals company, announced a research collaboration agreement with Oxford University aimed at identifying genes responsible for ischaemic heart disease, caused by an inadequate supply of blood. The company said it will provide financial support to the university in return for clear options on the exploitation of drug development following the discovery of genetic targets during the collaboration.

Hornby back on track

SHARES of Hornby rose 8p to 244p yesterday after the toys and models company said it expected pre-tax profits for the year to March 31 to be no less than £2.5 million, ahead of City expectations, with earnings of 30p a share. The company incurred a pre-tax loss of £5.16 million in the previous 12 months. Hornby said trading over Christmas met expectations after a slow start. Sales in the first three months of 1997 matched those in the same period last year.

Polypipe to buy Celmac

POLYPIPE, the building products company, has agreed to buy a manufacturer of plastic toilet seats, for a maximum consideration of £10.9 million. Celmac, based near Manchester, recorded pre-tax profits of £1.6 million in 1996. Its net assets were £2.2 million at the year end. An initial £10.5 million will be paid in shares, with £400,000 payable in cash six months after completion. Polypipe is raising a further £4.9 million through a share issue to repay recent borrowings.

NIE in joint venture

NORTHERN IRELAND ELECTRICITY and United Utilities have set up a joint venture to take over NIE's training, data management and meter reading. Vertex Ireland, an operation between United Utilities' facilities division and NIE's equivalent business, will seek further work in payroll administration, pensions organisation and accounting. Four hundred NIE staff will transfer to Vertex, which will work from Belfast and Dublin and aim for a £100 million turnover within five years.

Portman 'stays a society'

PORTMAN BUILDING SOCIETY is committed to remaining in its present form and not converting to a bank, members were told yesterday. Addressing the annual meeting, Douglas Baker, chairman, said the society, which is based in Bournemouth, had reviewed its strategy for the future. "Our position is clear," he said. "We intend to remain a building society because we believe that this best serves the interests of both existing and future members."

AN EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER

THE TIMES

Get a free child ticket for Chessington



The Times, in association with Chessington

World of Adventures, offers you the chance to get

a free child ticket to London's theme park. As well as

stomach churning rides such as The Vampire or Rameses Revenge, younger adventurers can whizz around the track behind the wheel of the Toytown Truckers, or new this season, get lost in Action Man's Critical Mission, a challenging adventure maze. Plus there are crazy entertainers, the Big City Circus show and animal presentations.

HOW TO APPLY

Keep token one, right, and attach it to the free child ticket voucher which will be published in The Times tomorrow. Simply present the voucher and two tokens to the Chessington World of Adventures admission booth any day from now until May 31, 1997. When accompanied by an adult paying the full price, £18, you can get a free child ticket, normally £14. (A child is aged 4-14 inclusive.) Open 10am-5pm.



CHANGING TIMES

Early boost for Kuoni Reisen

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

KUONI REISEN, the Swiss travel group and tour operator, said first-quarter results for 1997 were above expectations, leading it to expect double-digit growth in revenues for the entire year.

It said that if exchange rates, on a yearly average, remain about the same, based on results for the first quarter, the company expected an increase in earnings before interest and tax of 20 per cent or more. "Depending on developments on securities exchanges, profit should also improve in line with this," it said.

Kuoni also cautioned that alongside uncertainty factors tied to currencies and securities markets, as well as short-term bookings, it has 50 per cent of its fixed costs in the first half, but realises only 10 to 20 per cent of its operating earnings in that period.

The majority of operating results are seen in the summer and autumn vacation period, which falls in the second half.

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Cashless society faces another test

BY SARA MCCONNELL

THE Republic of Ireland will get its first taste of the cashless society next year, when National Bank of Ireland and Ulster Bank launch a series of pilots to test the Mondex smartcard. Shoppers, users of public transport and others will be able to use the cards directly as an "electronic wallet" for small transactions, instead of using cash. The card can be loaded with cash and debited for goods or services at point of sale.

The two Irish banks will form a joint venture company to exploit the Mondex franchise and develop the necessary infrastructure. Similar franchises exist in the US, Canada, New Zealand and Hong Kong, under the umbrella of Mondex International. 51 per cent owned by Mastercard International. The first pilot in Swindon,



Keegan: Swindon project

Wiltshire, involving 13,000 users, is set to finish in July after two years. Mondex, headed by Mike Keegan, denied that the project had been slow to catch on and said the main aim of the pilot had been to test the equipment. Mondex cards are in use at Exeter and York Universities.

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France	(FF)	1986	974	1081	571	331
Netherlands (post)	(FL)	9104	4552	5040	2636	1527
Netherlands	(DF)	778	389	438	224	130
Spain	(PT)	75339	37669	41414	21640	12560
Switzerland	(SF)	909	454	445	232	135
Rest of Europe	(S)	474	n/a	227	118.5	70.04

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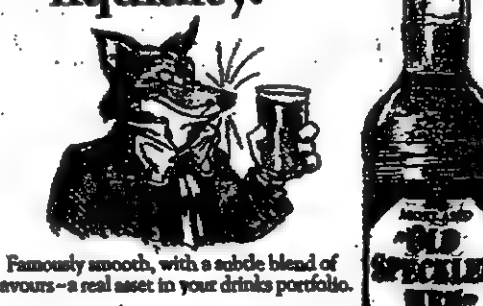
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CHANGING TIMES

My Hen stock
has great
liquidity.



Famously smooth, with a subtle blend of
flavours - a real asset in your drinks portfolio.

**A most
Gratifying
Ale.**

Brewed by Marston of Abingdon. Est'd 1711.

Equities sharply higher at close

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
499	407	405	Guinness	40.5	+0.2	0.5	13.1
500	407	405	Guinness	40.5	+0.2	0.5	13.1
501	407	405	Guinness	40.5	+0.2	0.5	13.1
502	407	405	Guinness	40.5	+0.2	0.5	13.1
503	407	405	Guinness	40.5	+0.2	0.5	13.1

BANKS

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
4700	361	359	ABN-AMRO	35.9	+0.2	0.6	17.7
4701	361	359	ABN-AMRO	35.9	+0.2	0.6	17.7
4702	361	359	ABN-AMRO	35.9	+0.2	0.6	17.7
4703	361	359	ABN-AMRO	35.9	+0.2	0.6	17.7
4704	361	359	ABN-AMRO	35.9	+0.2	0.6	17.7

BREWERS, PUBS & REST

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
761	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
762	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
763	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
764	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
765	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

BUILDING & CONSTRUCT

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
29	44	43	Arco	43.5	+0.5	1.1	20.1
30	44	43	Arco	43.5	+0.5	1.1	20.1
31	44	43	Arco	43.5	+0.5	1.1	20.1
32	44	43	Arco	43.5	+0.5	1.1	20.1
33	44	43	Arco	43.5	+0.5	1.1	20.1

BUILDING MATERIALS

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
76	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
77	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
78	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
79	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
80	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

CHEMICALS

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
170	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
171	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
172	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
173	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
174	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

DISTRIBUTORS

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
26	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
27	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
28	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
29	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
30	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

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765	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

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30	44	43	Arco	43.5	+0.5	1.1	20.1
31	44	43	Arco	43.5	+0.5	1.1	20.1
32	44	43	Arco	43.5	+0.5	1.1	20.1
33	44	43	Arco	43.5	+0.5	1.1	20.1

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79	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
80	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

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1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
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171	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
172	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
173	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
174	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

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29	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
30	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
47	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
48	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
49	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
50	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
51	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

FOOD MANUFACTURE

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
52	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
53	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
54	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
55	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
56	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

HEALTHCARE

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
100	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
101	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
102	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
103	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
104	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

HOUSEHOLD GOODS

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
105	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
106	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
107	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
108	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
109	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

INSURANCE

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
110	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
111	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
112	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
113	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
114	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
115	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
116	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
117	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
118	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
119	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

LEISURE & HOTELS

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
120	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
121	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
122	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
123	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
124	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

MINEING

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
125	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
126	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
127	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
128	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
129	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

OIL & GAS

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
130	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
131	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
132	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
133	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
134	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

OTHER FINANCIAL

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
135	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
136	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
137	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
138	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
139	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

RETAILERS, FOOD

1997	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
140	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
141	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
142	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
143	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
144	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6

RETAILERS, GENERAL

145	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
146	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
147	10	9	Beck's	9.5	+0.5	5.3	15.6
148	1						
149	1						
150	1						
151	1						
152	1						
153	1						
154	1						
155	1						
156	1						
157	1						
158	1						
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200	1						



FILM
Johnny Depp, brightest of the brat-pack stars, prepares to deromanticise the Mafia



CHOICE 1
Glen Tetley creates a new work for six of the Royal Ballet's leading dancers
VENUE: Tonight at the Royal Opera House

THE TIMES ARTS



CHOICE 2
Penelope Keith returns to the stage in Mrs Warren's Profession
VENUE: Opens tonight in Guildford, before touring



CHOICE 3
Peter Whelan's new play, *Overture*, opens tonight in Stoke-on-Trent
VENUE: At the New Theatre

Hollywood just can't get a grip on Johnny Depp, the anti-star star. Martyn Palmer reports

Outsider on the A-list

By now Johnny Depp could, if he so desired, have turned himself into the conventional Hollywood movie idol that he is. He could, for instance, have taken the lead in the huge box office success *Speed*, which made Keanu Reeves a star. Depp turned it down, as he rejected *Legends of the Fall* and *Interview With the Vampire*, major vehicles for Brad Pitt and Tom Cruise respectively.

Instead, the 33-year-old Depp has chosen his own path, preferring to devote his time to films often described as "quirky", usually well-received by the critics, displaying a formidable talent that has drawn accolades from actors of the stature of Marlon Brando and Al Pacino.

Depp's movies may have been slightly leftfield — such as *Cry Baby*, *Edward Scissorhands*, *What's Eating Gilbert Grape?* and *Ed Wood* — but they have never been anything less than interesting. And, if Depp is regarded as A-list in Tinseltown, then it's almost in spite of himself.

So, when the British director Mike Newell was casting for *Donnie Brasco*, the true story of an undercover FBI agent who infiltrated the mob for six years, he knew that Depp was the man to place alongside Pacino.

"Why did I choose Johnny and not someone like Keanu? Well, I wanted someone who could act, for a start," Newell says. "And Johnny is a very, very clever actor, make no mistake about that."

When you point this out to Depp, and add the fact that both Brando and Pacino have called him the best actor of his generation, he positively squirms with embarrassment. "I don't know why people like that say those things, but I mean, obviously, that's great," he stumbles. "I'm lucky to be able to say that they are friends of mine, but they are heroes too, you know? I have nothing but respect for them."

A lesser actor could have been chewed up and spat out by Pacino, but in *Donnie Brasco* it is a bit like watching the Method King passing his blessings to his heir apparent. "Working with Al was everything and a whole lot more than I expected," Depp says. "It was a real treat and an honour. I learned as much as I could from him. I expected him to be very serious and not very loose and playful, but he wasn't like that at all. He was constantly making jokes and making people laugh."

The film's central relation-



Johnny Depp in his new film, *Donnie Brasco*, as the real-life FBI agent who went underground against the mob

ship is between Joe Pistone, the real-life undercover FBI agent who adopted the identity of *Donnie Brasco*, a small-time Florida jewel thief, and Lefty Ruggiero (Pacino), the lowly, embittered Mafia man who unwittingly vouches for him so that he gains access to the mob world.

Before starting filming, Depp spent months in preparation with Pistone, now 53 and retired from the FBI. Depp, Pistone says, was hardly what he expected. "All I knew about Johnny was what I'd read in the papers," he says. "You know, about him trashing hotel rooms and stuff. But we spent a lot of time together, we worked out together in the gym. I took him to the FBI academy in Virginia, and he wanted to know everything."

"He would even ring up my wife and ask questions. He kept saying, 'I want to make this right for you, you have to live with this film for the rest of your life and I want to do it justice.' And he did. He captured me to a T."

"He wouldn't even go to see a screening until I could go with him. Most actors wouldn't care, they would just

take the money and run. He's a lovely guy."

In the film Pistone makes a close friend of Ruggiero, a man Pistone knows he must ultimately betray. "I spoke about that with Joe," says Depp. "He said that there is no way you can hang around with someone for six years solid and not feel something for them. On the one hand you can hate them and despise them, but on the other you sort of love the guy."

"But it's wrong to say that Joe was betraying them. If he had been a Mafia guy from the beginning and then turned on his friends and associates that would have been a betrayal. But the fact is that Joe came in as an FBI agent and he was just doing his job."

"He made an enormous sacrifice. He missed his children growing up, he faced the daily threat to his life, and he had to move his family constantly to protect them. He is maybe the strongest person I ever met in my life."

Donnie Brasco is, on the surface at least, Depp's most mainstream film since he crossed over from television — where he played a cop in the hit *21 Jump Street* — almost ten years ago. But it would be wrong to assume that he is now about to start accepting some of those blockbuster scripts that drop, unsolicited, on the shoulders of the Hollywood Hills.

Instead, he is back in the editing suite finishing *The Brave*, a film which he co-wrote, directed and stars in alongside Brando. A dark, brooding story of a young man involved in a snuff movie, *The Brave* is hardly going to be mainstream.

"I've never seen a snuff movie and I didn't want to," he says. "So when I made the film I tried to skirt around the idea of what he was actually going to be doing. So it's never really mentioned, but the audience kind of wonders about it."

"*The Brave* was the most difficult thing I've ever done and I was an idiot to attempt it. It's way too much work for one person. You get up before anybody else and you go to bed later than anybody and when you are asleep you are dreaming about it. I don't know that I'll ever catch up on the sleep I lost."

Born in Kentucky, the youngest of three children, Depp moved to Los Angeles in his teens with the hope of carving out a career in music. His first love, and he started acting to pay the bills. Then came *21 Jump Street*, and he was suddenly splashed across the covers of teen magazines all over the world.

It is an image he has been trying to resist ever since. Indeed, he is more likely to make the covers of teen mags these days because of his girlfriend, the British model Kate Moss, and his friendship with rock stars such as Noel Gallagher of Oasis.

"It's strange," he says. "I never had much ambition. I never really wanted to be an actor and I never really wanted to be a director. I was a musician and I still am. This other stuff kind of happened."

Depp's *Brasco* opens on Friday

I was, still am, a musician. This other stuff just happened

LONDON

LOVE AND UNDERSTANDING Most psychological games and shy manoeuvres are performed in Joe Penhall's new play where an aspiring sculptor's life is threatened by a vector's demands. Mike Bradwell directs. Swan Theatre, Swan Lane, W12 (0181-743 3388). Previews tonight and tomorrow, 8pm. Opens May 2, 7pm. Then Mon-Sat, 8pm.

ROYAL BALLET The company's latest new programme includes a new ballet by Glen Tetley, Balanchine's *Symphony in C* and Karim Makhlouf's *The Jack Tree*. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (0171-304 4000). Tonight, 7.30pm. Then tomorrow, noon, Saturday, 7.30pm, May 10, 2pm and 7pm, May 14 and 15, 7.30pm.

SCHOOLGIRLS IN UNIFORM A cast of 18 women play teachers and students in a stage version of Christa Wolf's 1983 novel, *Good Friend*. National Theatre, London (0171-304 4000). Previews tonight, 7.30pm. Then Mon-Sat, 8pm.

ELSEWHERE See *O'Neil* tonight for an interesting account in *Richard*

TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Gillian Macey

Colin's reveal of Lady Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen* and *Henry VIII* play the doctored *Hamlet* and *Bohemia* in the east. *Shakespeare* (revival) at the Lyric Theatre, London (0171-304 4000). Previews tonight, 7.30pm. Then Mon-Sat, 8pm. Then Sun, 2pm.

EDINBURGH Scottish Opera stages its first production of *Don Giovanni* since 1950. Scottish Opera, Edinburgh (0171-304 4000). Previews tonight, 7.30pm. Then Mon-Sat, 8pm. Then Sun, 2pm.

GUILDFORD Penelope Keith is a curious choice for the successful *Mrs Warren's Profession*, but you never can tell. Alan Strain directs a nine-week tour. Guildford Theatre, Guildford (01483 440000). Previews tonight, 7.30pm. Then Mon-Sat, 8pm. Then Sun, 2pm.

NEWCASTLE See *O'Neil* tonight for an interesting account in *Richard*

STOCK-ON-TRENT Peter Whelan

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THEATRE 1

All of life is here? Rising playwright Joe Penhall takes society's misfits as his subject



THEATRE 2

At the Tricycle *The Mai* proves to be a dour Irish drama about a family in turmoil

THE TIMES ARTS



RISING STAR

Director, actor, composer: is there no area in which Neil Rutherford can't excel?



TOMORROW

How does Helena Bonham Carter measure up in her latest role? Read Geoff Brown on the new films

THEATRE: Why one of our best new playwrights is now writing about morality rather than murder. Plus review

Barking up a family tree

Marina Carr's *Portia Coughlan*, which came last year from Dublin to the Royal Court, pulled us deep into the mind of a violent depressive, incestuously obsessed with her dead brother, in the process providing a marvellous role for Derbhle Crotty. Carr's *The Mai* draws us into the family whose tree is helpfully published in the programme, and, though it has its sharp moments, the result is more spread out and less intense. After all, trees are trees, and it can be hard to see the trunk for the leaves.

Mainly, the emphasis is on Mai, or the Mai as she is called. The play opens as her husband, Robert, returns to her lake-house in central Ireland from a long, unexplained absence in America: when it ends, he is having an affair with a local woman. The problem is, Mai loves him and cannot bring herself to reject him. One of the play's points is that people find themselves deciding whether to put their spouses or their children first and, when they opt too strongly for the former, emotional disaster may ensue.

The point is emphasised by the arrival of Myra Carter's Grandma Fraochlan, a 100-year-old exotic whose marbles and taste for opium are unimpaired by time. She still mythologises her fisherman husband, and is still resented by her unloved, unlovable 75-year-old daughter.

The troubles extend to the next generation, mainly represented by Judith Scott's Mai, and even to the next. By the close Mai's daughter, Millie, has acquired an illegitimate son — and what, given his author's mistrust of families, will his fate be?

I'm not revealing vital secrets. For one thing, *The Mai* does not generate great

tension, and for another, it is presented in the once unconventional, now conventional form of the Irish memory play. This means that Diane O'Kelly's Millie spends a lot of time silently witnessing intimate exchanges from the living-room sidelines, occasionally coming forward to fill us in on events that might have been more deftly evoked.

Still, Nicolas Kent's cast has its strengths. Carter's antique



Myra Carter as 100-year-old Grandma Fraochlan in *The Mai*

Grandma has a nice line in hoarse farmyard squawks, and Angela Crow, playing the most damaged of her brood, an equally good one in wintry looks and frosty remarks. Scott's Mai does not get the chances Derbhle Crotty had last year, but she bests her emotional stumps for a big, angry run-in with Robert O'Connell, playing her somewhat underwritten husband. For that scene, at least, you believe families are as destructive as Marina Carr suggests.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

Wild cards may be sexier, but Joe Penhall's latest play is about hard workers. Jeremy Kingston met him

Joe Penhall's first play, called *Wild Turkey* and set in a pizza bar, was shown in 1993 at the New Play Festival at the Old Red Lion. A year later *Some Voices*, where the schizophrenic hero starts to see horrors while cooking an omelette, was staged at the Theatre Upstairs and lauded for just about everything: emotional truth, balanced treatment of combatants, razor-sharp, eloquent writing.

Then came *Pale Horse*, where the action was divided between a gangsterish South London club and Balham Common, where the club-owner found himself having to bury a murdered rival. Praised for its ability to create moods of rage and grief, the play came unstuck in the second half and was seen as an intriguing stage in Penhall's journey as a writer.

His next play, the critics said, would be eagerly awaited, and here it is: *Love and Understanding*, starting previews today at the Bush Theatre.

Half the characters in *Some Voices* were finding difficulty adjusting to what the rest of society considered proper human behaviour. In *Pale Horse* a wild girl beats a customer to death with a baseball bat. So does *Love and Understanding* come from the same mould of violence and fear?

"On a superficial level a lot of people are going to identify with this rogue, because he's funny and he's charming. But obviously on a deeper level there's a personal morality. If you work hard all your life and subscribe to a set of ideals, which this doctor does, it shouldn't be laughed at."

"Everyone identifies with the wild cards at the moment. It's sexy, it's cool, it gets the headlines. And there's certainly the trend in films to write very brutal, flip, ironic, not particularly emotionally truthful material, which is astoundingly funny, but there's just so much of it. So this new play turns on a sixpence. Little things, which don't have to be boring things. Style things, questions of sensibility. In *Some Voices* and *Pale Horse* there were very big, macro things, baseball bats and murder and fire, things that are easy to grasp. But to write drama about a new shower curtain is more challenging."

In his jeans, black T-shirt and leather jacket, it is easy to picture the 28-year-old Penhall as he must have looked when he played in a rock'n'roll band ten years ago. "I think it's disrespectful to compartmentalise people in terms of reactionary, wears a tie, goes to work and flip, louche, Byronic. There are a lot of people in between, particularly my friends. They're cool, they're funny, they're charismatic, but they're also hard-working and moral. This middle ground isn't on show."

In the 1930s the documentary film-maker John Grierson wrote that behind all his films had been one idea: "That the ordinary affairs of people's lives are more dramatic and more vital than all the false excitements you can muster. If Penhall can succeed in showing the excitements of life in the middle ground, he will become a valuable playwright."

● *Love and Understanding* previews from tonight at the Bush Theatre (0181-743 3383)

Fair to the middling



Joe Penhall: "My plays always seem to revolve around a straight man and a misfit"

Make it rich and snappy

ENFIELD-born pianist/composer Michael Garrick, shortly to celebrate his 64th birthday, is extraordinarily prolific. Since entering music in the late 1950s, he has produced suites on everything from the works of Tolkien and Hardy to the marital troubles of the Royal Family, as well as a series of "Jazz Portraits" of inspirational figures. He has also produced a number of larger, more ambitious pieces such as the choral work *Jazz Prayers*, performed in St Paul's Cathedral in 1968.

At the beginning of this concert, Garrick bounded on to the stage exuding keenness

JAZZ

Michael Garrick
Purcell Room

and brisk efficiency. Leading a 16-piece big band from the piano, he plunged straight into a rousing rendition of the first of the evening's numerous "Portraits". Good Times, dedicated to Lester Young, was immediately followed by the slow-building *Swallows on the Water*, inspired by the late West Indian saxophonist Joe Harriott.

A snappy, almost Mingusian piece from *Jazz Prayers*, *Salvation March*, introduced one of the evening's most memorable soloists, alto player Matt Wates, but the hub of the concert's first half was provided by a sensitive vocal performance by Jacqui Dankworth. Whether gliding through Garrick's swooning blues portrait of Ben Webster, or injecting powerful pathos into Ellington's *Blues from Black, Brown and Beige*, her smooth, warm voice provided an elegant centre for all the busy virtuosity around her.

As prominent in the concert's second half was Garrick's violinist son Chris, who performed with considerable aplomb. If this rich evening's music had a fault, it was entirely unavoidable: Garrick's conducting duties prevented his showing off his distinctive piano playing.

CHRIS PARKER

18 MAY - 24 AUGUST 1997

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I always think Heaven must be a bit like Glyndebourne...



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GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament: NEIL RUTHERFORD

Profession: Actor/composer/director. Born in Manchester, raised in Letchworth, Herts.

Age: 27.

Latest credits: Currently to be seen in the touring production of *Salad Days*. He also directed the Mercury Workshop's recent, highly praised revue *Late & Lyric*, presented at the Jermy Street Theatre. He will be on the big screen shortly, playing alongside Zoe Wanamaker in director Beeban Kidron's new film, *Any Fox*. A ballet commission and a musical are in the works, too.

He wears many hats, then: "I don't like being categorised. I like being able to swap and choose between directing, performing and composing. I enjoy all three, and as long as I can juggle them, it's great."

What was his earliest stage experience? "I was hopping around inside my mother when she was pregnant and playing one of the nuns in an amateur production of *The Sound of Music*. He made a more conventional sort of debut in a staging of *Carou-*



sel when he was five. He wrote his first musical, *Letters*, while at college, winning financial backing from impresario Cameron Mackintosh.

Most exciting experience so far? Appearing at the Palladium as Motel the Tailor in *Fiddler On The Roof* with Topol, three years ago. "Just to be on the stage of the Palladium was amazing."

The shoestring budget of *Late & Lyric* must have been quite a contrast. "It

was a challenge to have little more than a box and a tree to work with as a set. I was still involved with it when the *Salad Days* tour started: directing by telephone is fun."

What about the new show-in-progress? *A Life To Come* is based on short stories by E.M. Forster. "My original aim was to write a musical version of *Maurice*, but it was too difficult to get the rights. There's a gay element to the show, but I'm really attracted to the romanticism of the Edwardian era."

But can the young writers showcased in *Late & Lyric* compete with the mega-musicals? "Yes, but it's going to take time, because the vast majority of coach parties want to see the blockbusters. I do recognise that the big wows are the audience-pullers — the West End musical has never been so popular. Yet I can foresee the emergence of studio-type shows modelled on composers like Sondheim. I just wish that producers would see that too: most of them just don't want to take risks. I am optimistic, though."

CLIVE DAVIS

A rose in her own right

WHO needs an all-dancing, all-singing West End spectacular when you can have Amanda McBroom instead? She must be weary of being described as the woman who wrote *The Rose* for Bette Midler, since she has plenty of other credits to her name. Brash yet sophisticated, she has devised a quite unmissable entertainment, bravely placing the emphasis on her own compositions.

CABARET
Amanda McBroom
Pizza on the Park

Like all skilful cabaret singers McBroom brings conversational intimacy to a lyric, yet she is also capable of abrupt shifts into a purer, operatic-like register.

Some of her finest songs — *Dance, Ship in a Bottle* — unfold beautifully observed studies in disillusionment. Her training as an actress allows her to attack lyrics with an intensity which might otherwise be unbearably melodramatic. On her new album, *A Waiting Heart*, the lush orchestral arrangements can prove a distraction, but in concert Joel Silberman's cultured piano-playing formed the ideal foil, prodding her

ever onwards. The countrified waltz, *Errol Flynn*, offered McBroom's touching memories of her own father, David Bruce, a film actor destined always to be a supporting player. A superb medley flowed from the wide-eyed romance of the standard *Teach Me Tonight* — adorned

with playful doo-wop style piano triplets — to the brutal dissolving of worldly goods on *You Can Have The TV*. But it was not wall-to-wall melancholia — McBroom's self-deprecating wit always shone through.

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DESIGN

Gardens in the sky: Norman Foster's new Frankfurt tower puts the wow into office life



MUSIC 1

Matthias Bamert resuscitates a miniature masterpiece by Berthold Goldschmidt

THE TIMES
ARTS



MUSIC 2

... while London hears Sir Peter Maxwell Davies's jaunty new Piccolo Concerto



VISUAL ART

Birds of a feather: Edinburgh enjoys an exhibition of remarkable miniatures

Opposites attract

SIBELIUS 7 has transformed composers' lives, or so we're told. And here was Peter Maxwell Davies on the podium with the Royal Philharmonic to prove it. Whether or not Davies uses the music computer program of that name I cannot be sure, but he certainly knows his way around the original article.

Sibelius's method of achieving thematic unity out of fragments is nearly the reverse of a favourite Davies compositional process: but another composer, of whatever hue, is likely to bring insights to the interpretation of a work as tightly constructed as Sibelius's Seventh.

Davies's reading was most convincing in its realisation of the shape of the whole. It was less satisfying in its evocation of atmosphere. Sibelius's textures are so detailed that decisions have constantly to be made about what is to be foreground and what background. There were times here when too much was jostling for attention.

Davies as composer was represented by a new work: a piccolo concerto receiving its London premiere, and skilfully played by Stewart McIlwham. The piccolo may have obvious limitations as a

CONCERTS

RPO/Maxwell Davies
Barbican

solo instrument, but Davies is not one to shirk a challenge. What he does is to play with the stereotypical modes of the instrument, so that the military "pipe and drum" effect is hinted at near the beginning of the third movement, while the jaunty manner is recalled at the close of the first, but as through a veil.

A potentially comic partnership with the bass clarinet is also dignified when the two instruments engage in meditative dialogue in the second movement. The bass clarinet is better equipped for this mode than the piccolo, but finally even Davies's ingenuity — and McIlwham's versatility — is exhausted.

More predictable but not lacking in passion or warmth was the account of Max Bruch's Violin Concerto No 1 in G minor, with Tasmin Little the soloist.

BARRY MILLINGTON

Young at heart

THE difference between Berthold Goldschmidt's Violin Concerto and his *Rondeau*, which also features a solo violin, is not just the 40 years that elapsed between them. It is a matter of inspiration. Apart from a weak third movement, the concerto, in its revised version, is an accomplished and attractive work. The *Rondeau*, which was written for Chantal Juillet after Goldschmidt had heard her perform the concerto in 1994, is a little masterpiece.

It is encouraging to think of a composer in his nineties so moved by the playing of a young violinist — and, one imagines, her personality — that he could produce something as fresh as the *Rondeau*. Cryptographically, it derives its main theme from the musical letters in its subtitle, *Rue du rocher*, the street in Paris where Goldschmidt first thought of the piece over a meal with Juliette and Charles Dutoit. Essentially, it is about the sound and style of playing that inspired the piece, with its particularly eloquent passages of double-stopping and its happy vivacity.

The first British perfor-

mance of the *Rondeau* in its authentic form with chamber ensemble was an interesting occasion. The interpretation offered by Matthias Bamert with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Juliette in the Queen's Hall was less characterful than the composer's account shortly before his death last year, but it was more successful in integrating the sometimes awkward wind counterpoints and smoothing out the bumps in the scoring. The Violin Concerto, which was almost persuasively performed in the same concert, might have been better if, having perceived that there was a weakness in the last of the three movements of the original version, Goldschmidt had cut it out and replaced it. Leaving it where it was and adding new finale makes a substantial and impressive work of it, slightly flawed in its untidy jig though it might still be.

GERALD LARNER

The height of horticulture

ARCHITECTURE: Marcus Binney reports on Sir Norman Foster's remarkable new tower of gardens

LONDON may be saying no to Sir Norman Foster's vision of a soaring Millennium Tower. But Frankfurt has no such qualms. Foster's new Commerzbank headquarters, now virtually complete, already rejoices in the title of Europe's tallest building. The big difference is that the Frankfurt tower is not twice as high as its neighbours but only gently nudges past them.

Designed with a brilliant engineer, Chris Wise of Ove Arup, it is good news for all those who toll in hermetically sealed office blocks. Foster's office of the future is a gigantic garden reaching 57 storeys into the sky, with spectacular views from every desk, and providing, at the press of a button, a gust of cool fresh air as invigorating as that through the windows of an Alpine chalet.

To the locals, Foster's Commerzbank building in downtown Frankfurt may look "no big deal". But inside it sets a standard which all must envy. "It all stems from one simple idea," says Uwe Nienstadt, Foster's man on the spot. Traditionally, skyscrapers have had a central core containing the lifts. Here Foster has placed the service cores in the three corners of an equilateral triangle leaving a soaring void in the middle.

Stand in the centre of the main lobby and look up, and you have the sensation of peering into the world's biggest kaleidoscope: a 500ft vertical tube lit by the sky and broken into a myriad crystalline triangles. These are in fact the glazing bars of three transparent smoke breaks and the glass roof above.

Foster's grand idea is the creation of a series of nine glass conservatory gardens in the sky, rising round the tower like the steps of a huge spiral staircase. "The partner in charge, Spencer de Grey, explains: "The whole aim was to avoid the endless repetitive

floors of the normal tower and create a village-like quality, with 240 employees enjoying each garden."

Each garden is four storeys high and runs the length of one side. Wherever you sit you can see one above and one below. The huge outside windows of the gardens seem the size of lmax screens and provide vistas across the city.

The bank has put vending machines in all the gardens (perhaps not quite as Norman would have designed) and the broad edges of the planting beds are all at seat or bar height. In the world of the laptop and the mobile phone, I

The gardens will create the feeling of small villages

would be tempted to work here all day.

Best of all is the intensely fresh scent as you enter, like walking into a country garden after the rain. Each garden is different — Mediterranean on the south, Asian on the east and American on the west — and planted in turn with cypresses and olives, cedars, rhododendrons and bamboos.

Commerzbank has rejected open plan in favour of a Scandinavian "combi" layout by which staff will sit in rooms with floor-to-ceiling glass partitions which allow people to see but not hear what goes on inside. "Just 30 people will work on each side of each floor. That is an enjoyable grouping," says de Grey. The rest comes when bank staff, still apprehensive about abandoning traditional small offices, move in next month.

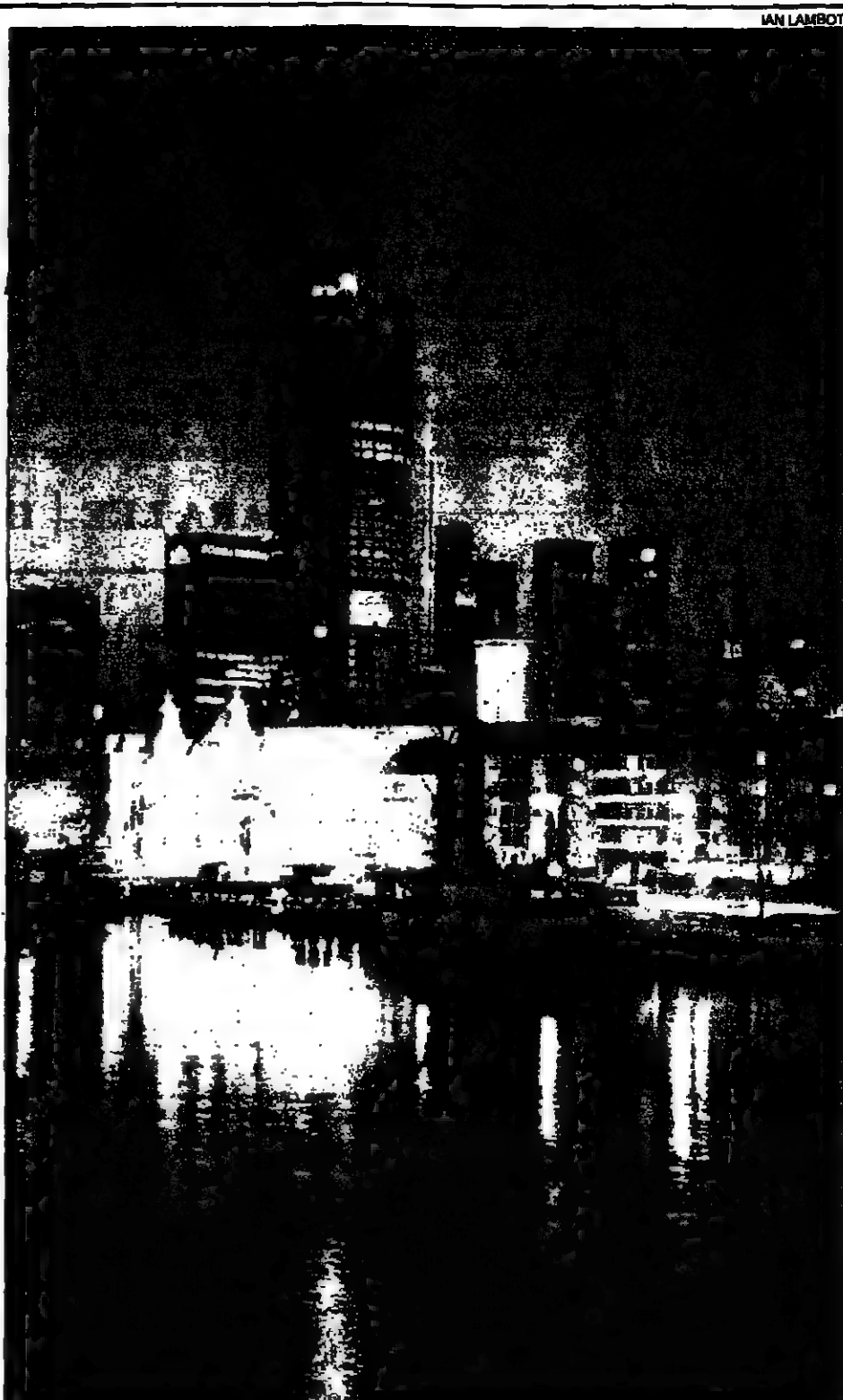
The extraordinary sense of openness comes from the complete lack of internal columns. This is the super-scale engineering at which Foster excels, the successor to the giant coathanger trusses he used on his Hong Kong Bank. Here the weight of the spans is carried on huge square trusses with horizontal beams concealed within window seats. Each window pane is about twice as wide as usual in an office block, again reducing the sense of being boxed in.

Press the "open" button and a grating noise like a portcullis follows as the whole window tilts back from the top. Even on a still day there is an immediate refreshing rush of air, as well as the starting and welcome hum of city life below.

The real fresh air fiend can also venture out onto the generous balconies outside the gardens, which have head-high glass balustrades to prevent vertigo. Here, however, the rushing mighty wind that greets you may be a deterrent.

Given that the interior is so sensational, the outside is unexpectedly bland — though it has its beautiful moments, for example at sunset from across the river. Part of the reason is that Commerzbank wanted to know the exact cost before they sank the first pile into the Frankfurt clay, mindful of the fact that the chairman of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank asked Foster for the best office building in the world — and also got the most expensive.

So Commerzbank opted for an all-in fixed price contract (£200 million, compared with nearly £500 million in Hong Kong). Out went Foster's louvred panels and in came smooth replacements which have a clip-on look. The local planners also had strong views. "They did not want a Messian high-rise set back across a plaza: an American solution they felt would be devoid of people," says Nienstadt.



Reflected glory: Foster's Commerzbank building in Frankfurt will open next month

VISUAL ART: John Russell Taylor admires treasures from Japan and Italy

A big hand for the little people

If you believe that small is beautiful, Edinburgh has the ideal shows for you. The more spectacular is that devoted to the 19th-century Japanese artist Shibata Zeshin at the Royal Museum of Scotland. Zeshin is not a household name in the way that Hokusai or Utamaro are, for a very good reason: while they worked in colour wood-blocks which were easily disseminated throughout the world, he is a master — perhaps the supreme master — of lacquer. Moreover, he was very famous in his own lifetime (1807-1891), and most of his work has stayed in Japan, despite the eagerness of Western connoisseurs.

Or had, until Dr Nasser Khalili came on the scene. Dr Khalili is a collector of unique determination, as those who saw a trawl of his Ottoman collection at the Bnei Gallery last year will remember. The result in this case is an assembly of about 70 pieces in a display hitherto unrivalled, even in Japan. Most of the pieces are small — no larger than can be held in the hand — although there are also some more ambitiously scaled trays and wall-plaques, as well as a screen and a handful of works on paper.



The lacquered lid of a writing box made c 1860-70 by the influential 19th-century Japanese artist, Shibata Zeshin

But what infinite riches in the single gallery they now inhabit. In Japan, Zeshin is regarded as a prime example of that untranslatable quality *iki*, which is rendered roughly as "light and unconstrained, gallant without being obstinate, playful but never tiresome, assertive but not argumentative". In other words, the man had style. Again and again in this show one can see the combination of ease, inventiveness and total discipline. The glamorous materials are employed with as-

tonishing economy, never flaunting themselves, to make writing-boxes, purses, sake cups, fans and scrolls. Usually the colours are subdued, occasionally they flare up, as in the teacup with a brilliant red teapot on it.

Presumably Zeshin's many patrons wanted his work for their own personal pleasure. Cassiano dal Pozzo had something more far-reaching in view. He was an early 17th-century Roman collector and connoisseur. One of Poussin's most important patrons and a

friend of Galileo, he was not hesitant in embarking on a vast project in his Museo Cartaceo, or Paper Museum. He wanted to cover graphically as much as possible of the world's assembled wisdom, and since he was not able to buy all the antiquities he needed for his scheme, he set a group of mostly young artists (some of whom, such as Pietro da Cortona, went on to later fame) to document in drawings everything worth knowing in the ancient and modern worlds.

Many of the original 7,000 drawings have found their way into the Royal Collection at Windsor, and from there into a weird and wonderful loan show at the National Gallery of Scotland. The technique is usually miniaturist, even if the drawings themselves are large. Cassiano's enterprise may be odd, but you can't help admiring his sense of purpose. And some absolutely exquisite drawings result.

Shibata Zeshin is at the Royal Museum of Scotland, Chambers St., Edinburgh (0131-225 7534) until Oct 1. Cassiano dal Pozzo's Paper Museum is at the National Gallery of Scotland, The Mound, Edinburgh (0131-556 8921) until June 8.

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FOOTBALL: MANAGER SAYS SCOTLAND CAN CONFIRM CREDENTIALS AS LIKELY QUALIFIERS FOR WORLD CUP FINALS IN SWEDEN TONIGHT

Brown believes McAllister can make the difference

FROM KEVIN MCCARRA
IN GOTHENBURG

THE late arrival is always the last to leave. A principle that holds true for parties seems to apply to football as well. This evening, against Sweden in the Ullevi Stadium, Gary McAllister will win his fifth cap for Scotland, but he is in no mood to depart or to lapse into rocking-chair reminiscence about the good times of yesterday.

If the beginning of his international career was delayed, McAllister is intent on deferring his conclusion, too. McAllister, 32, was not picked for any match at Italia 90 and is, therefore, eager, as captain, to shepherd the present Scotland team towards France so

that, next year, he can play in the World Cup finals for the first time.

In discussion of his endangered club, Coventry City, it is evident that diligence, self-interest and patriotism have all fused together. "I have three years of my contract left," he said, "and, if Coventry can retain their premier division status, then I think I'll be good enough to keep going. You've got to be playing at a high level each week if you want to continue at international level."

McAllister can be as discriminating in his selection of the correct pass as he is in examination of his own motives. In the 2-0 victory over Austria earlier this month, he gave a significant perfor-

mance and Craig Brown, the Scotland manager, finds in McAllister cause for satisfaction. The side's domination of group four, thus far, has been impressive.

Hubris is the national sin and, after severe punishment of it in the past, there is now a superstitious dread of any expression of hope. Brown, however, cannot help but announce a confidence that his men are capable of making themselves likely winners of the group by defeating Sweden, even though the Swedes were outlandishly unlucky to lose 1-0 in Scotland last year.

"They didn't have McAllister to contend with at Stora, because he was suspended then," Brown said.

GROUP FOUR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Scotland	4	3	0	1	7	3	9
Austria	4	2	0	2	5	4	6
Sweden	4	2	0	2	5	4	6
Estonia	4	1	1	2	3	4	3
Latvia	4	0	1	3	3	7	1

"He may find himself marked tonight, but I hope he is too majestic a figure to be troubled by Par Zetterberg. We have got to win the midfield battle and I think we can."

McAllister is abetted there by Paul Lambert, whose Borussia Dortmund side are in the European Cup final, and John Collins, who will shortly be part of the AS Monaco team as it clinches the French championship. Such is

the prestige of the trio that Paul McStay, with his 76 caps, will have to tolerate a place on the bench.

Might this not be the moment to speculate that Scotland achieve good results because they have good players who have been organised by a good coach? Under-rated for so long, even Brown is now subject to reappraisal and features on all the nodal lists of candidates to replace Tommy Burns at Celtic, should the club choose to dismiss its manager.

Were he ever to abandon his charges, Brown would still feel a pang of regret. Scotland have yet to concede a goal in group four, the midfield is adept and a partnership in attack has been found that is

as pleasing as it is incongruous. For most of his life, the concept of Darren Jackson, of Hibernian, as international forward would have been scoffed at, and Kevin Callacher is scarcely prolific for Blackburn Rovers.

Together, however, they supply a mobility and enthusiasm that ensure that they usually suffer exhaustion and have to be replaced near the end of each game. By then, as when Callacher scored twice against Austria, much damage may have been done. Despite that, Scotland cannot swagger into the Ullevi Stadium tonight.

Sweden, in decline since reaching the semi-finals of the World Cup in 1994, see this as their last chance of recovery in

the group and boldness is expected, with three forwards fielded. Thomas Ravelli, the Sweden goalkeeper, who will win his 138th cap, has been on the losing side against Scotland in three meetings in international tournaments, but, if Brown is correct, his longevity will only have preserved him for one further disappointment.

SWEDEN (4-3-3, probable): T Ravelli (FK) — G Sundgren (ABO), P Andersson (Borussia Monchengladbach), J Bjorkstrand (Borussia Dortmund), J Larsson (Malmö FF), J Thors (AS Roma), P Callaghan (Aston Villa), S Schuster (Fortuna), A Andersson (IFK), K Andersson (Göteborg), M Larsson (Borussia Monchengladbach).



Brown: quietly confident

Premiership pair offer cutting edge

FROM BRIAN GLANVILLE IN NAPLES

IN A game against Poland here that Italy must win to retain pole position in their and England's World Cup group, they are likely to use a strike force of Gianfranco Zola and Fabrizio Ravanelli. There is still some doubt about the hamstring that Zola hurt a couple of weeks ago playing for Chelsea against Wimbledon, and Cesare Maldini, the Italy coach, has said that he will not pick him unless he is a 100 per cent fit. Nevertheless, the word is that Zola will start the match at least.

Yet how long will he stay at Chelsea? "I'm sure I'll remain in London next year," he has said, "but then we'll see. I am no longer a little boy and I want to finish my career in Italy. I've got a plan and I know what I want to do."



Zola: return

Ravanelli plays because Christian Vieri, who has done so well in his first two internationals, is unfit and Gigi Casiraghi, the Lazio centre forward, has only just returned to the field after a protracted absence. Zola and Ravanelli, however, have played together before, most memorably against Wales, last season, in the deep puddles at Terri.

For Zola, this is a romantic return to the stadium where he made his name, playing initially alongside Diego Maradona before succeeding him in the Napoli No 10 jersey.

"Naples is like that," he said, "it stays inside you. I played against Napoli at the San Paolo stadium with Par-

ma. I threw flowers to their fans, who had appreciated me for four years. Thanks to this warmth, I, a player from the third division, a Mr Nobody, had the chance to shape myself, to grow, to reach the international team."

Otherwise, it is a question of rounding up the usual suspects — Costacurta as sweeper in the restored catenaccio defence, Ferrara and Carnavaro as markers, Di Livio, a winger, and Paolo Maldini, an attacking full back, on the flanks, Dino Baggio, Albertini and Di Matteo, of Chelsea, in midfield, Roberto Baggio, recalled after a 16-month absence and all his traumas with Arrigo Sacchi, Cesare Maldini's predecessor, standing by for Zola. Maldini said that he would not pick Baggio unless he was in the AC Milan team, where Sacchi has now been forced to recall him.

Recently, in Chorzow, Italy were lucky to survive against Poland. Peruzzi, their goalkeeper, untypically fumbled a fierce, low free kick. The ball spun up in the air, giving Wojtala, the tall Poland defender, what seemed an unmissable chance. Wojtala put his header over the bar. That was a dour Italian performance. The Azurri had only one real strike at goal, Zola's.

In Naples, the script will be quite different, attack the inevitable theme. Antoni Piechniczek, the Poland coach, is tranquil. "The match? We know it won't be easy for us," he said. "The value of Italian football we see in the European cups, with two teams in the finals. Bringing back Baggio, Maldini has shown himself a great psychologist. We have little to lose. It is up to Italy to go for the win."

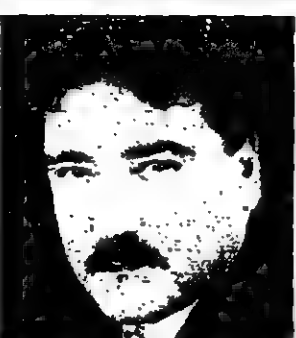
Poland are expected to play five in defence, with just Ciko up front. Juszkowiak has dropped out, injured. Skrzipek may again mark Zola, as he did in Chorzow.

ITALY: A Peruzzi, A Costacurta, C Ferrara, F Carnavaro, A Di Livio, D Baggio, R Di Matteo, D Albertini, P Maldini, G Zola, F Ravanelli.

POLAND: A Wojtala, A Laskowski, P Wojtala, J Ziminski, P Skrzipek, H Bialasowski, W Walczak, P Nowak, P Skrzeczkowski, M Cicho, W Juszkowiak.

Kinkladze balancing act takes centre stage

MICHAEL CALVIN



catches a glimpse of a worrying sight for England at Wembley

A deserted Wembley echoes to the rituals of the recreation ground. The game is two-touch piggy-in-the-middle, and the ball falls to Giorgi Kinkladze. He cushions it on his instep, caresses it with his studs, and, with a sudden snap of his right boot, flicks it up and over a bemused challenger. He giggles at his audacity, revels in the fleeing embarrassment that he has created in Georgia's final training session before the World Cup qualifying match against England tonight. There is a telling innocence to the scene, which offers a freeze-frame image of a man at ease with the talent that has transformed his life. He has a boy's face and a boyish nature.

Professional football, especially when it is endured in the Vaudevillean atmosphere of Manchester City, encourages suspicion of strangers, however. When it is time to leave, Kinkladze feigns a lack of English to ward off those who wish to question him about his self-proclaimed status as a spy in the English camp.

Perhaps he has taken note of David Kipiani, who faces his first competitive game as national coach after replacing Alexander Chivadze, his former Dynamo Tbilisi teammate. "Sure, he has been telling the players what it is like to play here," Kipiani said, "but I'd prefer it if they listened to me rather than Kinkladze."

"I tell you straight. We are talking too much about him. Everybody knows he is a star, but, if Kinkladze played alone tomorrow, he would not win. We would not win. The greatest players play for the team instead of themselves. I tell my team that is the most important thing."

Such words may appear sour and self-defensive in print, but they were



Kinkladze goes through his repertoire at Wembley yesterday. Photograph: Marc Aspland

delivered with warmth and a wicked grin. Kipiani, grey and bald, looks a generation older than his 46 years, but has the soft, full face and kind brown eyes of a clown. Though everyday life in a nascent republic demands pragmatism, he has a romantic's optimism.

He is comfortable with football's enigma variations. His faith in Kinkladze has survived the player's failure to respond to the physical challenge presented by David Batty in England's 2-0 win in Tbilisi last

November. That timid performance underlined why others question his durability, his discipline.

That is the way of things in England, where, all too often, extravagant ability is not taken at face value. Call it the Le Tissier syndrome, an affliction that prompts observers to detect weakness in Kinkladze's ballistic demeanour rather than to explore the advantages of his impeccable balance and instinctive skill.

He is small in stature, and does

not appease his critics by possessing the muscular mobility of Gianfranco Zola, England's *bête noire* in this World Cup qualifying competition. He also lacks the stage that Chelsea offer Zola. Kipiani, for one, recognises the dangers of Maine Road being a no man's land of mediocrity.

"Kinkladze has improved in England," he said. "He has grown up as a player, both physically and technically, but the problems at Manchester City, with the club

staying in the first division, are not good for him."

Irrespective of Kinkladze's little local difficulty, the economic advantages of playing in England are compelling to other members of the 18-man squad. The Bosman-style "free transfer" package that will take Temur Ketsabia, a midfield player, from AEK Athens to Newcastle United in the summer has concentrated many minds.

Yesterday, Ketsabia refused to dwell on his impending move, preferring to concentrate on what he termed "the biggest game of my life". He fooled nobody with familiar noises about "the legend" of Wembley. His insistence that "we are all thrilled to play in the motherland of football" did not have the impact of stage whispers that suggested AC Milan will be watching Kinkladze tonight.

Kipiani saw no point in being disingenuous. "Why shouldn't players think of playing here?" he said. "International games are very important to those who want to write

'An Englishman is a real gentleman. He never kicks you behind the referee'

their names in football. Manchester City made their move for Kinkladze after watching him against Wales." It is not his concern that Michael Kavelashvili, a compatriot subsequently signed by City to ease the culture shock for Kinkladze, has struggled to impose himself on even the Nationwide League. The dangers of Eastern European exports entering an economic comfort zone are one of the few factors that an international manager does not have to take into account.

Kipiani's respect for the English game is genuine. He lost only once as a player in three European ties against English opposition, 5-1 against Tottenham in the 1973 UEFA Cup, and recites the names of his conquerors — "Chivers, Peters, Coates, England, Jennings... ah, a great team" — like a mantra.

"I know English football well," he said. "I know how to play here. It is important not to be afraid. An Englishman gives everything, but he is a real gentleman. He never kicks you behind the referee."

Kinkladze may have cause to think differently if Batty snaps at his heels tonight, but those who looked into the eyes of the piggy-in-the-middle yesterday will wait, and wonder...

McCarthy looks forward to mission impossible

FROM RUSSELL KEMPSON IN BUCHAREST

MICK MCCARTHY, the Ireland manager, has always accepted that following in the revered footsteps of Jack Charlton was an impossible task. How could he equal, let alone improve on, the achievements of a figure who had assumed almost saintly status by the time he exchanged boot and ball for rod and line and retired to the riverbank?

Tonight, here in the Steaua Stadium, McCarthy would take a similar step along the path to deification if Ireland were able to defeat Romania in their group eight World Cup qualifying match. Even a draw would earn McCarthy, an abundance of brownie points in a tie that, statistically and realistically, appears well beyond his side.

Already, Romania have one foot in the finals in France next year, having scored 19 goals and conceded none in the course of five successive victories. Anghel Iordanescu, the coach, draws his players from Europe's most distinguished clubs and is a firm believer in tactical enterprise — attack, attack and, if in doubt, attack some more. So far, it has proved unstoppable. Privately, McCarthy may

shudder at the prospect facing his innocents abroad. Publicly, he remains relaxed, with only a hint of pre-match edginess. "Romania are a good side, a very good side indeed," he said. "They play 'total football', they like to get forward as much as possible and the speed and variation of their passing will always cause problems. They always

GROUP EIGHT

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Romania	4	3	0	1	10	5	9
Macedonia	4	2	1	1	10	5	7
Ukraine	4	2	0	2	4	5	6
Ireland	4	0	2	2	1	7	2
Luxembourg	4	0	0	4	2	23	0

lose their shape at times, which is something we might be able to take advantage of.

"Will they be cagey? I don't think so. They'll try to win it, just like all their other games, and they've obviously got the ability to do that. A draw would be a great result for us."

Defeat, with Romania going on to win the group comfortably, is likely, yet McCarthy will be looking for signs that Ireland are capable of emerg-

ing at the top of the three-cornered scrap for second place, which also involves Lithuania and Macedonia, and claiming the subsequent play-off berth. The route to France is still open.

Whatever the result, he also wants a more passionate, coherent display than that which surrendered the three points to Macedonia in a 3-2 loss in Skopje earlier this month. "Anyone who played in that game and was as hurt as they should have been will want the chance to rectify matters," McCarthy said. "That opportunity is now. I've had an excellent response in training, despite the usual interruption caused by injuries, and the players are ready for it. Although we'll have to be at our very best to get anything, I'm reasonably optimistic."

ROMANIA (probable): G Stancu (Steaua Bucharest), D Petrescu (Chelous), T Bocu (Steaua Bucharest), D Prodan (Alba Iulia), A Dobos (Alba Iulia), G Popescu (Steaua Bucharest), D Muresan (Steaua Bucharest), G Hagi (Steaua Bucharest), A Bica (Steaua Bucharest), V Vladu (Colentina).

IRELAND (probable): K Kelly (Sheff Wed), D O'Leary (Sheff Wed), G Brown (Coventry City), S Sturges (Aston Villa), V Hume (Leeds United), R Kearney (Manchester United), G Kelly (Leeds United), R Houghton (Crystal Palace), A Townsend (Aston Villa), M Kennedy (Liverpool), D Conboy (Walsley) or A Cacciano (Mersey).

Hamilton forced to experiment

BRYAN HAMILTON, the Northern Ireland manager, enters a largely academic World Cup qualifying contest with Armenia in Yerevan this afternoon short of seven players originally named in the squad, and with three others struggling through injury (David Maddock writes).

It is the perfect opportunity, then, for Hamilton to experiment and he will do so with at least three new faces against a side that held Northern Ireland to a 0-0 draw in Belfast in a qualifying match before the turn of the year.

James Quinn will play alongside Iain Dowie, of West Ham United, in a two-pronged attack, and Hamilton will also draft in John McCarthy, of Port Vale, who replaces the suspended Gillespie. Hamilton could even give a start to Jeff Whitley, 18, who has yet to break into the Manchester City team, giving even fresher-faced look than usual.

GROUP NINE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ukraine	4	3	0	1	6	3	9
Portugal	4	2	0	2	5	4	6
Germany	4	2	0	2	5	4	6
Norway	4	1	1	2	3	4	3
Armenia	4	0	1	3	3	7	1
Albania	4	0	1	3	3	10	1

Stockport set sights on division title

BY DAVID MADDOCK

NOWHERE can the champagne have flowed more deservedly this season than in the Stockport County dressing-room on Monday evening. The defeat of Chesterfield guaranteed automatic promotion to the Nationwide League first division — their highest placing since they spent one fleeting season in the old second division, way back in 1937-38.

Stockport have done it the hard way. They have endured a fixture list that would have had Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager, scurrying to the European Court of Human Rights.

Their fixture pile-up, the product of a gloriously drawn out Coca-Cola Cup campaign, even saw them play four matches in one week. They did falter ominously, but somehow toughed out three games in the past week to win promotion.

David Jones, the manager, was still coming to terms with his side's success yesterday. "We enjoyed our cup run to reach a semi-final and to run Middlesbrough, with all their big-money stars, so close was a wonderful achievement," he said, "but the league was the only objective at the start of the

season and, I must admit, I feared the cup would cost us that. It has been a hell of a programme and I can't credit my players enough for the manner in which they have come through it."

Jones has now set the target of winning the second division title — they have two more games this week to be won to pip Bury, the leaders — and, beyond that, survival in the higher division. Brendan Ellwood, the Stockport chairman said: "We are not the struggling club that people used to make jokes about. We have a decent ground with plans for further development and we have a wonderful manager. There is plenty more to be heard of Stockport County."

While Stockport savour their success, Manchester United are looking to ensure that they enjoy more by securing a goalscorer. Ferguson will fly to Germany today to look at Andrei Shevchenko, the exciting 20-year-old Ukraine forward, who would cost United in the region of £3 million.

Everton look likely to sign Francesco Moriero, the Roma midfield player, in a free transfer in the summer.

Pick up the phone

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WORLD CUP QUALIFIER

1/7 ENGLAND 9/2 DRAW GEORGIA 14/1
Wembley, Kick-off 8.00pm, Live on Sky.

CORRECT SCORE

10/1 ENGLAND 1-0	11/1 ENGLAND 3-1
9/1 ENGLAND 2-0	10/1 ENGLAND 4-1
16/1 ENGLAND 2-1	9/1 DRAW 1-1
7/1 ENGLAND 3-0	22/1 GEORGIA 1-0

Other scores on request.

FIRST GOALSCORER

11/4 SHEARER (E)	12/1 MCANAMAN (E)
5/1 FERDINAND (E)	16/1 INCE (E)
8/1 BECKHAM (E)	16/1 KINKLADZE (G)
12/1 ARVILLADZE (G)	20/1 ADAMS (E)

Own goals do not count. Other players on request.

LATEST ODDS AND WINNERS FROM THE TIMES TELETYPE - Teletext on CH4 P081/082/083

WILLIAM HILL

RACING: STOUTE RELUCTANT TO SPECULATE ON CLASSIC OUTCOME FOR HIS TALKING HORSE

Entrepreneur has plenty to prove

By JULIAN MUSCAT

A SPATE of 2,000 Guineas candidates were in action on Newmarket Heath yesterday as trainers put the finishing touches to their contenders for the classic on Saturday. Poet, Musical Pursuit and Yalaitanee — who remains a possibility for the race — were all on show, but post-work discussion invariably centred on Entrepreneur.

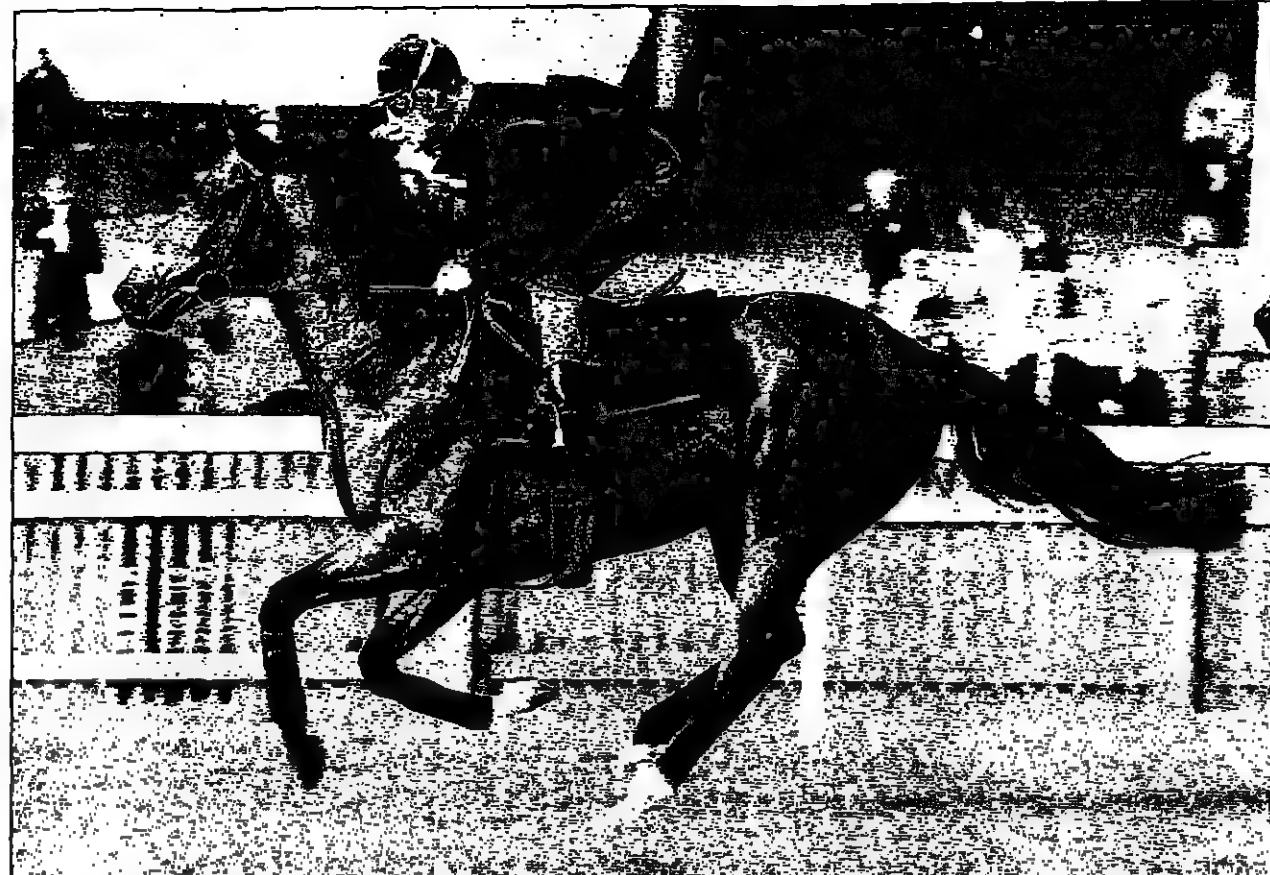
This much-vaunted colt has bewitched the racing community since his participation was confirmed earlier this month. Some gallop-watchers

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: **WORLD PREMIER** (3.40 Ascot)
Next best: **Delilah** (2.30 Ascot)

were taken by his work with the useful Unius yesterday. Others described it as no more than routine exercise in Greville Starkey's hands. Michael Stoute, who trains the colt, confined himself to the observation: "He just went five furlongs working in front, with the other horse following him up."

This bare expression of the facts has frustrated those seeking strains of encouragement for Entrepreneur's prospects. But Stoute's reticence, while central to his character, has been reinforced by the spectacular 2,000 Guineas plunge on



Entrepreneur is put through his paces by Starkey in readiness for Saturday's 2,000 Guineas. Photograph: Ed Byrne

Entrepreneur. He is reluctant to fuel the flames of something outside his control — much less champion a horse on evidence other than hard race-course performance. In that respect, Entrepreneur, the winner of two small races last year, has much to prove.

Yet the circumstances speak favourably of Entrepreneur, whose pedigree accords him total dominance in betting on the Derby. Furthermore, his stablemates, Desert Story and Yalaitanee, annexed the principal 2,000 Guineas trials earlier this month. "He is a

horse with a 12-furlong pedigree," Stoute said. "His full-sister (Dance A Dream) was second in the Oaks and his full-brother (Sadler's Image) has stakes class form at up to 13 furlongs. But we feel he is entitled to take his chance in the Guineas [one mile]."

whose family has spawned plenty of precocious runners.

One thing is certain: Stoute has not scaled the peaks by running horses over unsuitable trips. The impression that Entrepreneur tackles the Guineas entirely on merit is endorsed by Stoute's reluctance to speculate towards the Derby. Asked if he would be pleased for the horse to finish full of running in third place on Saturday, he said: "That is a hypothetical question. Let's just see what happens and take it from there."

In other 2,000 Guineas developments, Kieren Fallon, who partners the Mark Tompkins-trained Musical Pursuit, had a feel of the colt for the first time yesterday. The Dewhurst Stakes winner went on at the end of his work with Cool Edge, prompting an upbeat assessment from his trainer. "Everything has gone smoothly and he has a good each-way chance."

Poet, trained by Luca Cumani, should have had his confidence boosted when allowed to stride away from five stablemates. Yalaitanee also pleased in his spin, although a decision on his participation — and that of stablemate Desert Story — remains on hold.

But the money yesterday was for Revogue, who has assumed outright favouritism from Entrepreneur with Ladbrokes' champion juvenile has contracted to 7-2 from 4-1.

Time arrives for Witching Hour

ASCOT

2.30: Noisette shaped well on her debut at Haydock last September but meets four lightly raced fillies with useful form. Imperial Scholar's fifth in Reunion in the Nell Gwyn at Newmarket makes the best reading but she hung fire for most of the race. Delilah also showed signs of temperament when a tail-flashing second to Rebecca Sharp at the same meeting. Witching Hour seems more dependable. She trounced a field of maidens at Yarmouth last May and ran second to a good sort in Fernanda at York the following month.

BBC1

3.05: Double Trigger and Grey Shot, last year's principals, lock horns again, but the old guard of stayers is vulnerable to the emergence of fresh blood like Jynshi. He improved massively last season and his new trainer, Ed Dunlop, continues in good form. The sort to make a strapping four-year-old, Jynshi will benefit from the likely strong pace and should be an each-way price. Election Day and



TODAY'S RACES ON TELEVISION

Orchestra Stall are also improvers in an intriguing curtain-raiser to the cup racing season.

3.40: Cadeaux Tryst, whose form at a mile will stand him in good stead over this stiff seven furlongs, has the added advantage of a high draw among a preponderance of front-runners. He needed the run at Newbury and his jockey, Daragh O'Donoghue, is great value for a 3/1 claim. Yeast, last year's winner, has a much stiffer task this time round, and World Premier and Tregaron make more appeal. Newwest is well-handicapped but prefers a sharp track.

JAMES WILLOUGHBY

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Bath

Going: good to firm
2.00 (1m 2f) 1. MAID OF CAMELOT (P) 2. Gypsy 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 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SNOOKER

Doherty comeback puts Higgins under pressure

By Phil Yates

KEN DOHERTY, on the receiving end of three heavy defeats at the hands of John Higgins, repaired early damage to ensure that he will enter the concluding two sessions of their quarter-final in the Embassy world championship on level terms at 4-4.

Doherty has never performed particularly well at the Crucible Theatre, or indeed against Higgins, but, by overwhelming Steve Davis 13-3 in the last 16 on Monday, he gave himself an immeasurable boost in confidence.

Yet, when Higgins exploited Doherty's initial vulnerability to lead 3-0, Doherty, soundly beaten 9-3 by Higgins in the final of the 1995 German Open and the semi-final of the United Kingdom championship this season, appeared in trouble.

This hole became deeper

when Higgins, who also whitewashed Doherty 5-0 at the 1995 International Open, occupied prime position in the fourth frame. However, he presented Doherty with a lifeline by missing a routine

DETAILS

SECOND ROUND (best of 25 frames): J. Higgins (Scotland) 13-7 J. Doherty (Wales) 13-5.

QUARTER-FINALS (best of 25 frames): D. Morgan (Wales) 13-7 J. Higgins (Scotland) 13-5. A. Hurrell (England) 13-7 J. Higgins (Scotland) 13-5.

TELEVISION: BBC1, 11.35pm and 2.10pm; BBC2, 4.0pm and 7.45pm.

of the remaining four frames and left the arena feeling far more satisfied with the outcome than his rival.

James Wattana, of Thailand, whose pre-championship form suggested that any hopes of becoming only the second overseas player to capture the title were forlorn, built a 5-3 overnight lead against John Parrott.

A clearance of 129 represented the ideal start for Parrott, but Wattana won four of five frames after trailing 2-1.

Maintaining the determination that enabled him to edge Ronnie O'Sullivan 13-12 in the previous round, Darren Morgan made a 5-3 lead over Stephen Hendry, the title-holder. With the exception of a mid-session burst, Hendry's display was lacklustre.

Morgan, having found great self-belief at the end of a season in which he has had precious little, settled down quickly with contributions of 52 and 84 to win the first two frames before an unforced error swung the momentum in favour of Hendry.

Leading 28-8 in the third, and handily placed in the reds, Morgan overextended and missed one to corner pocket. Hendry made a 97 clearance, tied the scores at 2-2 with a 47 break launched by a spectacular plant and moved 3-2 ahead by taking the fifth.

Importantly, Morgan arrested Hendry's march. He tactically controlled the sixth and won the seventh with a break of 77 when Hendry suffered a "kick" that caused him to miss a red to a middle pocket.

Hendry failed to score in the closing frame of the morning — he had a total of only 19 points in the last three.

The World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association, the game's governing body, yesterday announced that the number of world ranking tournaments will be reduced from ten to eight for the 1997-98 campaign. The casualties next season will be the European Open, staged in Malta for the past two years, and the Asian Classic.



Walkington proudly shows off the Cup after Hunslet's victory in 1934 and, right, the victorious captain as he is today

Clubs still rising to the challenge

Christopher Irvine looks back over 100 years of rugby league's showpiece final

Substitutions were 30 years off in the 1934 Challenge Cup final. Jack Walkington knew the worst had happened after he had sent Cyril Morrell galloping clear on an overlap.

In crashing over the line, Morrell shattered his collarbone. A player down for an hour, Walkington's inspiring words and leadership were, in many ways, responsible for Hunslet's 11-5 defeat of Widnes. The captain's message was simple: "Get stuck in, and, above all, retain possession."

Widnes were barely allowed a sniff of the ball in the second half and Hunslet completed a remarkable victory. Walkington, now 88, is the only survivor of that 1934 final. Indeed, he is the oldest player left of any of the previous finals. Certain details remain sharp in his mind, though: a £2 raise for winning, pre-match roast beef, Dolly Dawson's charging drives, the presentation of the trophy by Lord Derby and celebrations on the team's return at the new Leeds Civic Hall.

"Even in those days, Wembley was a big thing, a special day," Walkington said. "I remember it as big and wide, even more so when we only had 12 men. They talk about fitness today, but we were as fit as we could be then. The game is more open now and it was less of a spectacle then."

Hunslet are back at Wembley on Saturday, with a chance of echoing distant glories in the Plate final, against Hull Kingston Rovers.

Two decades before the annual pilgrimage from the North to Wembley, the 1907-08 Hunslet team, which contained the great Goldthorpe brothers, Albert and Walter, won the Cup in the first clean sweep of all the trophies — a feat emulated by Huddersfield, in 1914-15, and 80 years later by Wigan, whose Cup record is unparalleled: 16 victories, nine defeats.

St Helens, Wigan's arch-rivals, were one of the inaugural finalists and the centenary final, against Bradford Bulls, is their fifteenth appearance. Batley, the opposition at Headingley in 1997, were a power in the new Northern Union, the breakaway formed two years before. The trophy, still played for today, cost £60 from Fattorini Silversmiths, of Bradford. Batley won it with a 10-3 victory.

Duff, Wharton's backer, had originally wanted to gamble £20,000, but agreed to increase the stake when challenged by Warren at a press conference. "I always put my money where my mouth is and I think Robin Reid is a very underrated fighter," Warren, who once successfully beat £120,000 on Tim Witherspoon to beat Frank Bruno, said.

Congreaves signs

Basketball: Andrea Congreaves, the England international, will be one of only three non-Americans participating in the inaugural eight-team Women's National Basketball Association when it begins in June. A 6ft 2in centre, Congreaves will play for Charlotte Sting.

Davis excels

Lacrosse: Wales could reach the third-place play-off after beating Canada 9-8 in the World Cup in Tokyo yesterday. Ailsa Davis scored the winning goal 15 seconds from time, her fourth of the match. Sarah Butt scored a hat-trick for England in the 7-5 defeat by the United States.

Giles returns

Hockey: England have named a squad of 16, including Calum Giles, the corner specialist, for the international against Germany in Düsseldorf on May 31. England, without Giles, failed to convert 28 short corners in the recent five nations' tournament in Karachi.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

BIDDY
a. A maid
b. A signal at bridge
c. A baby's feeder

SHEMOZZLE
a. A piece of harness
b. To kidnap
c. A rumpus

Answers on page 54



Elliott goes in search of winning formula for Bulls

By Christopher Irvine

BOTH Challenge Cup finalists have delayed announcing their teams. St Helens to give Alan Hunte every possible chance of recovering from a hamstring tear and Bradford Bulls because of indecision over their best permutation at half back.

Although Glen Tomlinson has played all but one game at scrum half for Bradford this season, Matthew Elliott, the Bulls coach, is considering moving Robbie Paul there to play alongside Graeme Bradley — the same combination used in the defeat by St Helens at Wembley last year. Tomlinson would be on the bench to provide insurance cover.

Tomlinson's recent form has slipped and the Paul-Bradley axis is a proven one, most notably in the semi-final defeat of Leeds Rhinos. "We've got a lot more depth across the park this year," Elliott said. "I've got some hard decisions in the next couple of days. I've only lost one night's sleep thinking about it."

If, as expected, Hunte does not make the final, St Helens will be without not only their "form" player. They will be deprived of a lot of the speed factor that makes them narrow favourites. With the Welsh Union (WRU) apparently having a hand in blocking the proposal by Scott Gibbs to fill the breach for his former club, Andy Haigh is favourite for the right centre position, ahead of Vila Matauria.

Until the WRU stepped in, there was a possibility that Swansea would have temporarily released Gibbs for a rental fee, even though it would have meant him missing their match against Neath, which is vital to their prospects of qualifying for the Heineken Cup next season. Gibbs is hoping that a deal can be agreed by which he can play a summer stint with St Helens next year.

John Monie, the former Wigan coach, has parted company with Auckland Warriors after defeats in six of nine matches in the Australasian Super League. Rather than returning to Central Park, he is expected to take a rest from the game.

TABLE TENNIS

Deng leads China to familiar triumph

By Richard Eaton

DENG YAPING, the world and Olympic champion and one of the sport's all-time greats, could soon retire after helping China's women to the team title at the world championships in Manchester yesterday.

"I plan to see if our young players are good enough to replace me before deciding whether or not to play another championships," Deng, 24, said after leading China to a 3-0 defeat of North Korea. The progress of Yang Ying, 21, and Li Ju, 22, who supported Deng's brilliant hitting and countering, may well influence that decision.

This was the Chinese women's eleventh victory in 12 championships — their only failure coming in 1991, when North Korea and

South Korea united to win the event — and ensured they cleared the first of seven hurdles that stand between them and retaining all their world titles.

China's progress to defending the men's crown was also impressive, although their 3-1 semi-final win over South Korea contained a defeat for the world champion, Kong Linghui, against Yoo Nam-Kyu.

England, by beating Holland 3-2, with two wins for Carl Prean, gave themselves the chance of playing for the thirteenth place in the men's event, against Italy. Katy Parker, the 12-year-old who is about to become the youngest English player to play in a world championships, makes her debut in the mixed doubles today.

EXETER

THUNDERER
2.20 Killing Time, 2.55 Colonel Blazer, 3.30 Spring To It, 4.00 Mr Conductor, 4.30 MYSTIC HILL (nap), 5.00 Contact Bridge.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM

SIS

2.20 PORTMAN FIXED INTEREST BOND NOVICES SELLING HURDLE (21,768, 2m 21) (5 runners)

1. 1000 HUNTING TIME 14 (F, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-10-0
2. 4000 CHILLI HERRING 15 (M, 1.0) B. Burrell 7-11-0
3. 4000 COUNTRY COLOURS 18 (F, 1.0) M. A. Fitzgerald 7-11-0
4. 4000 BARKHAM 21 (F, 1.0) J. Harris 7-11-0
5. 4000 MOUNT DUTCH 18 (F, 1.0) J. Harris 7-11-0
6. 4000 MOUNT DUTCH 18 (F, 1.0) J. Harris 7-11-0
7. 4000 MOUNT DUTCH 18 (F, 1.0) J. Harris 7-11-0
8. 4000 MOUNT DUTCH 18 (F, 1.0) J. Harris 7-11-0
9. 4000 MOUNT DUTCH 18 (F, 1.0) J. Harris 7-11-0
10. 4000 MOUNT DUTCH 18 (F, 1.0) J. Harris 7-11-0

2.55 ROYAL NAVY NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE (22,368, 2m 21) (5)

1. 4000 COLONEL BLAZER 12 (F, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0
2. 4000 COLONEL BLAZER 12 (F, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0
3. 4000 COLONEL BLAZER 12 (F, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0
4. 4000 COLONEL BLAZER 12 (F, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0
5. 4000 COLONEL BLAZER 12 (F, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0
6. 4000 COLONEL BLAZER 12 (F, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0
7. 4000 COLONEL BLAZER 12 (F, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0
8. 4000 COLONEL BLAZER 12 (F, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0
9. 4000 COLONEL BLAZER 12 (F, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0
10. 4000 COLONEL BLAZER 12 (F, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0

3.30 PORTMAN FINANCIAL PLANNERS NOVICES CHASE (24,117, 2m 21) (11) (7)

1. 4000 SPRING TO IT 15 (G, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0
2. 4000 SPRING TO IT 15 (G, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0
3. 4000 SPRING TO IT 15 (G, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0
4. 4000 SPRING TO IT 15 (G, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0
5. 4000 SPRING TO IT 15 (G, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0
6. 4000 SPRING TO IT 15 (G, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0
7. 4000 SPRING TO IT 15 (G, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0
8. 4000 SPRING TO IT 15 (G, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0
9. 4000 SPRING TO IT 15 (G, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0
10. 4000 SPRING TO IT 15 (G, 5.5) M. A. Fitzgerald 6-11-0

4.00 PORTMAN INSTANT ACCESS HANDICAP CHASE (23,844, 2m 31) (11) (5)

1. 4000 MR CONDUCTOR 30 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
2. 4000 MR CONDUCTOR 30 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
3. 4000 MR CONDUCTOR 30 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
4. 4000 MR CONDUCTOR 30 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
5. 4000 MR CONDUCTOR 30 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
6. 4000 MR CONDUCTOR 30 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
7. 4000 MR CONDUCTOR 30 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
8. 4000 MR CONDUCTOR 30 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
9. 4000 MR CONDUCTOR 30 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
10. 4000 MR CONDUCTOR 30 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0

4.30 PORTMAN FIXED RATE MORTGAGE HANDICAP HURDLE (22,528, 2m 31) (11) (5)

1. 4000 BELL ONE 18 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
2. 4000 BELL ONE 18 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
3. 4000 BELL ONE 18 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
4. 4000 BELL ONE 18 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
5. 4000 BELL ONE 18 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
6. 4000 BELL ONE 18 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
7. 4000 BELL ONE 18 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
8. 4000 BELL ONE 18 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
9. 4000 BELL ONE 18 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
10. 4000 BELL ONE 18 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0

5.00 ROYAL MARINES CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE (21,906, 2m 21) (5)

1. 4000 PIPER'S ROCK 21 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
2. 4000 PIPER'S ROCK 21 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
3. 4000 PIPER'S ROCK 21 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
4. 4000 PIPER'S ROCK 21 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
5. 4000 PIPER'S ROCK 21 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
6. 4000 PIPER'S ROCK 21 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
7. 4000 PIPER'S ROCK 21 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
8. 4000 PIPER'S ROCK 21 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
9. 4000 PIPER'S ROCK 21 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0
10. 4000 PIPER'S ROCK 21 (F, 5.5) R. A. Hume 6-11-0

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: Miss H. Knight, 31 winners from 95 runners, 32.6%: M. Page, 81 from 303, 26.7%: A. Dunn, 8 from 20, 40%: D. Burrell, 3 from 20, 15%: P. Murphy, 3 from 20, 15%: M. J. Harris, 10 from 78, 12.8%.

JOCKEYS: J. Taylor, 11 winners from 34 rides, 32.3%: P. Hume, 4 from 25, 16.0%: M. A. Fitzgerald, 17 from 110, 15.5%: J. O'Connell, 8 from 85, 9.4%: J. Frost, 16 from 137, 11.7%: Only qualifiers.

PLUMPTON

THUNDERER
2.10 Circus Colours, 2.45 Persian Elite, 3.20 Malwood Castle, 3.50 Theme Arena, 4.20 Linden's Lotto, 4.50 Night in A Million.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM

SIS

2.10 APRIL CLAIMING HURDLE (21,935, 2m 40) (7) (runners)

1. 3242 PETER MONDAY 26 (F, 5.5) M. Page 5-11-0
2. 3242 PETER MONDAY 26 (F, 5.5) M. Page 5-11-0
3. 3242 PETER MONDAY 26 (F, 5.5) M. Page 5-11-0
4. 3242 PETER MONDAY 26 (F, 5.5) M. Page 5-11-0
5. 3242 PETER MONDAY 26 (F, 5.5) M. Page 5-11-0
6. 3242 PETER MONDAY 26 (F, 5.5) M. Page 5-11-0
7. 3242 PETER MONDAY 26 (F, 5.5) M. Page 5-11-0
8. 3242 PETER MONDAY 26 (F, 5.5) M. Page 5-11-0
9. 3242 PETER MONDAY 26 (F, 5.5) M. Page 5-11-0
10. 3242 PETER MONDAY 26 (F, 5.5) M. Page 5-11-0

2.45 COOKSBRIDGE NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE (22,343, 2m 40) (5)

1. 4311 PERMAN ELITE 11 (G, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0
2. 4311 PERMAN ELITE 11 (G, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0
3. 4311 PERMAN ELITE 11 (G, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0
4. 4311 PERMAN ELITE 11 (G, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0
5. 4311 PERMAN ELITE 11 (G, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0
6. 4311 PERMAN ELITE 11 (G, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0
7. 4311 PERMAN ELITE 11 (G, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0
8. 4311 PERMAN ELITE 11 (G, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0
9. 4311 PERMAN ELITE 11 (G, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0
10. 4311 PERMAN ELITE 11 (G, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0

3.20 OFFHAM NOVICES CHASE (23,177, 2m 11) (11) (3)

1. 4514 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0
2. 4514 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0
3. 4514 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0
4. 4514 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0
5. 4514 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0
6. 4514 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0
7. 4514 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0
8. 4514 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0
9. 4514 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0
10. 4514 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0

3.50 HOVE FOUR YRS OLD FILLIES NOVICES HURDLE (22,181, 2m 10) (5)

1. 0221 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0
2. 0221 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0
3. 0221 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0
4. 0221 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0
5. 0221 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0
6. 0221 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0
7. 0221 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0
8. 0221 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0
9. 0221 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0
10. 0221 DREAM LEADER 9 (G, 5.5) M. Page 7-11-0

4.20 WINDSFIELD GREEN HANDICAP CHASE (22,947, 2m 50) (11)

1. 0247 LINDEN'S LOTTO 21 (F, 5.5) J. Taylor 6-11-0
2. 0247 LINDEN'S LOTTO 21 (F, 5.5) J. Taylor 6-11-0
3. 0247 LINDEN'S LOTTO 21 (F, 5.5) J. Taylor 6-11-0
4. 0247 LINDEN'S LOTTO 21 (F, 5.5) J. Taylor 6-11-0
5. 0247 LINDEN'S LOTTO 21 (F, 5.5) J. Taylor 6-11-0
6. 0247 LINDEN'S LOTTO 21 (F, 5.5) J. Taylor 6-11-0
7. 0247 LINDEN'S LOTTO 21 (F, 5.5) J. Taylor 6-11-0
8. 0247 LINDEN'S LOTTO 21 (F, 5.5) J. Taylor 6-11-0
9. 0247 LINDEN'S LOTTO 21 (F, 5.5) J. Taylor 6-11-0
10. 0247 LINDEN'S LOTTO 21 (F, 5.5) J. Taylor 6-11-0

4.50 LADBROKE HANDICAP HURDLE (22,242, 2m 40) (4)

1. 0245 ALLY HUNTER 18 (F, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0
2. 0245 ALLY HUNTER 18 (F, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0
3. 0245 ALLY HUNTER 18 (F, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0
4. 0245 ALLY HUNTER 18 (F, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0
5. 0245 ALLY HUNTER 18 (F, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0
6. 0245 ALLY HUNTER 18 (F, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0
7. 0245 ALLY HUNTER 18 (F, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0
8. 0245 ALLY HUNTER 18 (F, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0
9. 0245 ALLY HUNTER 18 (F, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0
10. 0245 ALLY HUNTER 18 (F, 5.5) D. Burrell 6-11-0

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: M. Page, 13 winners from 32 runners, 40.6%: C. Epton, 12 from 31, 38.7%: M. A. Fitzgerald, 5 from 18, 27.8%: J. O'Connell, 3 from 12, 25.0%: P. Murphy, 5 from 41, 12.2%: P. Frost, 7 from 29, 24.1%.

William Muir will aim Avert at the King's Stand Stakes or the Cork and Orrery Stakes at Royal Ascot after the six-year-old's win in the Corston Conditions Stakes at Bath yesterday.

IN BRIEF

Promoters have bet of £50,000

FRANK WARREN and Mickey Duff, the promoters, yesterday added spice to the contest between two of their boxers — Robin Reid and Henry Wharton — at the Nymex Arena, Manchester, on Saturday by agreeing a £50,000 wager on the outcome.

Duff, Wharton's backer, had originally wanted to gamble £20,000, but agreed to increase the stake when challenged by Warren at a press conference. "I always put my money where my mouth is and I think Robin Reid is a very underrated fighter," Warren, who once successfully beat £120,000 on Tim Witherspoon to beat Frank Bruno, said.

Congreaves signs

Basketball: Andrea Congreaves, the England international, will be one of only three non-Americans participating in the inaugural eight-team Women's National Basketball Association when it begins in June. A 6ft 2in centre, Congreaves will play for Charlotte Sting.

Davis excels

Lacrosse: Wales could reach the third-place play-off after beating Canada 9-8 in the World Cup in Tokyo yesterday. Ailsa Davis scored the winning goal 15 seconds from time, her fourth of the match. Sarah Butt scored a hat-trick for England in the 7-5 defeat by the United States.

Giles returns

Hockey: England have named a squad of 16, including Calum Giles, the corner specialist, for the international against Germany in Düsseldorf on May 31. England, without Giles, failed to convert 28 short corners in the recent five nations' tournament in Karachi.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

BIDDY
a. A maid
b. A signal at bridge
c. A baby's feeder

SHEMOZZLE
a. A piece of harness
b. To kidnap
c. A rumpus

Answers on page 54

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By Robert Sheehan, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

CRICKET: LANCASHIRE'S LONG UNBEATEN RUN IN BENSON AND HEDGES CUP COMES TO AN END

Yorkshire turn tables on Roses rivals

BY ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

OLD TRAFFORD (Lancashire won the toss): Yorkshire (2pts) beat Lancashire by 49 runs

FOR 16 matches, stretching back to 1994, Lancashire had reigned unbeaten in the Benson and Hedges Cup. They may yet win it for a third successive year, come July at Lord's, but their proud sequence was broken yesterday when Yorkshire won a tense, low-scoring zonal match, on a stiflingly slow pitch, with more in hand than had seemed likely.

If the run had to end, it was entirely appropriate that Yorkshire should be the beneficiaries, for they had come so close last June, when Lancashire snatched an epic semi-final victory at Old Trafford by one wicket and off the final ball. For too long they have suffered, subversively, in one-day Roses cricket and, whether or not this is the precursor of altered times, it was a result to make them believe in the possibility.

Lancashire, chasing only 204 in a match carried over because of the torrential rain of Monday, never managed to engage third gear and even a valiant and typically inventive 64 not out from Neil Fairbrother could not take them close. Finally, as he ran out of partners and overs simultaneously, Fairbrother failed to dominate the strike, let alone the bowling.

Just as he had done in the semi-final last season, Peter Martin strode out to win the match in a last-wicket stand. This time, though, rather than needing two from the final ball, he required 51 from five overs; predictably, it was beyond him.

True, Lancashire were without Mike Watkinson, their captain, and Wasim Akram, their overseas player, both unfit, and lost Glen Chapple when he broke a knuckle in the field. He will require surgery in hospital today; Lancashire may require the

return of Wasim against Derbyshire.

Lancashire, of course, have escaped from corners as tight as yesterday's, and many times. In acquiring the unargued accolade as the best cup side in the country, they have needed resilience and character as much as natural talent. In this competition, especially, they have never known when they are beaten.

Perhaps there was a false sense of security about their reply, for the Yorkshire total had seemed inadequate, even allowing for the stingy qualities of the pitch and the shortfalls in the Lancashire batting. Indeed, the impression throughout an unspired innings was that Yorkshire will miss Michael Bevan even more than they feared.

Time and again, last season, Bevan injected Yorkshire's batting with a steely conviction. He is a taciturn character, one who openly detests being beaten and his attitude did wonders for a dressing-room that probably needed some toughening up. This year they are going to have to stand alone and, on this evidence, they may not consistently be up to it.

The opening pair, past and present captains, proceeded contentedly to 69 before Martin, who had been beating the bat with outswinging, drifted one back in to bowl Martyn Moxon off his pad.

In Martin's next over, David Byas wrongly identified a long-hop, top-edging his pull to mid-on, and when Peter Hartley, the putative pitch-hitter, suffered the early late of so many such experiments, Yorkshire's platform had collapsed beneath them.

There were some undistinguished shots played as the innings declined, but this was as much because of frustrations with the pitch as to early-season rustiness. McGrath, having chanced his arm through the vacant slip



Martin, the Lancashire bowler, beats Moxon's defence and knocks back the Yorkshire batsman's stumps yesterday

area more than once, was caught at short third man, and Parker and Vaughan chipped simple catches as they tried to loft the ball over the infield.

The last four wickets went down for five runs and Lancashire, who had copied Leicestershire's huddle to generate body heat rather than bonding, left the windswept ground gratefully and confidently.

Six of their eight Benson and Hedges Cup wins last year came through batting second and there was what seemed at first to be a measured stealth about their

approach. Only when Hartley, still effective after all these years, took out Gallian and Crawley in his first two overs did the poise begin to splinter.

Atherton, having stayed around for 20 overs for 15, mistimed a drive to cover, Lloyd suffered a rare failure and Byas, juggling his bowlers with confusing speed, allowed for no retrenchment.

Once the fifth-wicket stand of 67 between Fairbrother and Ian Austin was broken by Chris Silverwood, who took the gold award, the rest was a formality.

OLD TRAFFORD SCOREBOARD

YORKSHIRE	LANCASHIRE
*D Byas c Atherton b Martin 32	J E R Gaskin b Byas 7
M D Moxon b Martin 26	*M A Atherton c White b Silverwood 15
M P Vaughan c Atherton b Austin 45	J P Crawley c Gough b Hartley 0
P J Hartley b Byas 13	N H Fairbrother not out 64
A McGrath c Austin b Byas 13	G O Lloyd c Gough 9
B Parker c Lloyd b Austin 15	I D Austin c Bailey b Silverwood 30
C White c Crawley b Green 26	G Vokes b Steno 1
IR J Bailey not out 16	R J Green b Gough 7
D Gough c Austin b Green 0	R J Martin b Hartley 0
C E W Silverwood c and b Martin 0	G Chapple not out 20
R D Stamp not out 2	Extras (lb 6, w 2, nb 0) 8
Extras (lb 2, w 7, nb 1) 10	
Total (48 overs) 203	Total (45.4 overs) 154
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-83, 2-77, 3-90, 4-114, 5-143, 6-165, 7-189, 8-199, 9-201	FALL OF WICKETS: 1-22, 2-34, 3-44, 4-57, 5-124, 6-133, 7-140, 8-153, 9-154
BOWLING: Martin 9-2-31-3, Austin 9-0-27-2, Chapple 5-1-23-0, Vokes 10-0-36-2, Green 10-0-45-2, Gaskin 5-0-32-0	BOWLING: Gough 4-0-22-2, Silverwood 10-2-23-3, White 5-1-28-0, Hartley 9-0-1-31-3, Steno 5-1-34-1, Vaughan 2-0-10-0
Umpires: R Julian and R A White	Gold award: C E W Silverwood

Grubby Derbyshire leave Jones fuming

BY MICHAEL AUSTIN

LAKENHAM (Derbyshire won the toss): Derbyshire (2pts) beat Minor Counties by six wickets

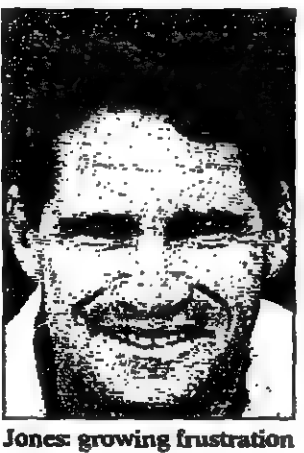
GIVEN the choice, Dean Jones, the Derbyshire captain and Australian master batsman, would probably have nominated anyone for the Gold Award except match-winning century-maker Chris Adams, the team-mate who ran him out. In equal measure, however, the champagne and blushes belonged to Adams.

Jones, already doubly frustrated at being marooned on 99 when rain washed away a potential championship win over Kent last Saturday, found himself ousted for 35 after responding faithfully but fatally to Adams's call and being sent back to the bowler's end.

However, this "yes-no" interlude, after Adams had pushed the ball gently to Jonathan Fielding at mid-on, scarcely disturbed Derbyshire's march to a much-easier victory than the 11 balls to

spare suggest. Even so, it did nothing for team morale. When climbing the steps of the thatched pavilion, Jones yelled: "He said go!" Seconds later, Jones hurried down his bat in the dressing-room.

He later cleaned his boots vigorously on the veranda, thankfully with a blunt instrument, scraping away the dirt and symbolically wiping his memory of a grubby team performance. Derbyshire's diary entry should read: Bowled



Jones growing frustration

badly, DeFreitas and Malcolm apart fielded moderately and batted passably well against, bless them, mostly second-class bowlers.

Derbyshire, windswept and already looking weary, trooped off for today's second round of games, continuing a no-ho-humorous mystery tour of Canterbury, Norwich and Old Trafford in the season's first competitive week.

Already, both opening batsmen have been stitched.

Adams has three in the right eyebrow, Kim Barnett six in his knee after mishaps in Kent. Dominic Cork has suffered from a groin strain with Andrew Hayhurst laid low by a knee cartilage problem.

In other respects, Adams was in perfect batting health, his 138 from 123 balls including six sixes and 14 fours before he was caught at the wicket off Stewart Laudat. Adams and Jones added 102 in 19 overs, a third-wicket partnership that Derbyshire appreciated because they looked tired down below.

Adams was only five runs short of beating Derbyshire's individual best in the competition, set, yes, by Jones against Minor Counties last summer. As for the minors, they still seek a third win against the majors this decade with the boundless enthusiasm that exists beyond the top shires.

The overturned Sussex in 1992, Leicestershire two years ago. This modern set, with five newcomers including Wayne Larkins, formerly of Northamptonshire and Durham, and Neal Radford, have a distinct spring in their stride.

The two former Test players - Larkins, of Bedfordshire, and Radford, of Herefordshire - have taken a compulsory year to qualify. No "outsider" in his first season represents Minor Counties.

The side batted reliably and fielded better than Derbyshire. A virtuoso bowling display from Radford on Friday, against Worcestershire, his former county, is hoped to galvanise their hopes.

LAKENHAM SCOREBOARD

MINOR COUNTIES	DERBYSHIRE
S J Dean c Kishen b Malcolm 7	K J Barnett c Nicholson b Fell 28
W Larkins c Jones b Malcolm 0	C J Adams c Nicholson b Laudat 138
J P J Sylvester b DeFreitas 7	C E Malcolm c Larkins b Fielding 19
T Cookham b Dean 30	*D M Jones not out 36
M A Fell b Roberts 67	G A Khan not out 13
R N Dalton b Harris 76	P Clarke not out 17
S V Laudat not out 43	Extras (lb 6, w 19) 25
J M Fielding c Clarke b Roberts 1	Total (48 overs, 48.1 overs) 280
M V Radford not out 10	P A J DeFreitas, N M Kishen, G M Roberts, A J Harris and K J Dean did not bat
Extras (lb 4, w 11) 15	FALL OF WICKETS: 1-98, 2-112, 3-214, 4-227
Total (47.1 overs) 258	BOWLING: Radford 10-0-31-0, Sharp 10-1-49-0, Dalton 6-1-0-53-0, Fielding 10-0-57-1, Fell 4-0-19-1, Laudat 8-0-45-1
Umpires: B J Mayer and B Loadwater	Gold award: C J Adams

More moves on Sussex merry-go-round

NIGEL BETT, the secretary of Sussex, who is on sick leave, has been dismissed by the club's new committee. Financial arrangements are at present being discussed. His replacement, who will be announced today, is Hugh Griffiths, 50, a former Rothmans executive.

Bett, who did not attend the annual meeting of the club at which the committee resigned, embarrassed some of the membership by being photographed for a naturist magazine. This picture has been reprinted in the current edition of *The Cricketer* and Bett has not returned to work since, but Robin Marlar, the

club chairman, insists that this was not a relevant issue.

What concerned Marlar was that, two years ago, a coach, Desmond Haynes, was appointed ahead of a director of cricket. According to Marlar, John Barclay, a former captain of Sussex who now oversees the indoor school at Arundel, would have been the obvious candidate. For that, Bett, a pleasant man who has been secretary of Sussex for nine years, took the blame.

The next announcement at Hove will be the appointment on May 7 of six new committee members to join the three in existence. These will be non-executives who will play no part in the day-to-day running of the club unless they are asked by Marlar or Tony Pigott, the chief executive, to take on a project, such as looking into the redevelopment of the ground.

It was likely that Bett's position at the club would be in jeopardy once the committee had resigned. Two years ago the departure of Norman Gifford, the coach, led to a review of the structure of personnel. Sussex decided to appoint a new first-team coach and create a position of director of cricket and coaching. The first role was swiftly filled through the recruitment of Haynes, but not the second.

EXTRA



COVER

Scorers put out

The county cricket scorers, who, four years ago, had to grapple with computerisation, are asked that they are having now to deal with the Dockworth Lewis system, the new method of working out run-rates required for limited-overs matches that are rain-affected. Two of their number work without remuneration and several are of an age when they do not want to cope with modern technology.

"The original idea was that the umpires would sort out the run-rates, but they decided the system would take too long to work out manually," Ted Lester, the chairman of the Association of Scorers, said. "So we have been put on." The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has asked the counties to improve the status and, perhaps, the remuneration of the scorers.

Vic Isaacs, of Hampshire, is the senior scorer on the county circuit. He is in his 24th year and has taken to the changes readily. The new system is fairer, but complex to work manually, which is why the umpires are worried about it," he said.

"Whether some scorers in an honorary capacity can continue, with the way things are going, I don't know. Clem Driver (Essex) and Stan Toxy (Derbyshire) had never looked at a computer before we were asked to use them."

"The younger element are coping better, but the ECB is still asking a lot. The counties will not find it easy to gain our replacements in future because the poor old scorers are still a second-class citizen, bracketed together with scoreboard operators, and those who work in the club shop."

Lions loathed

Sir Alec Bedser, Surrey's most famous living cricketer, is not a supporter of one-day cricket. He is still less an admirer of the gimmickery that has been introduced at his beloved Oval this season. "We are just copying what everyone else in the game is doing, including Australia," he said. "They have an academy, so we have to have an academy. They have music at matches, so we have it, too."

"The Surrey Lions are all

wrong. What is the problem with Surrey CCC? It's a great club. I don't think Lions roaring, coloured clothing or gimmicks bring spectators into the ground. I have passed on my views to the committee. The only reason I am critical is because I want to see standards maintained and I find it hard to believe all this is necessary."

Roving eye

The BBC is to employ a roving reporter during Test matches for the first time this year. Simon Hughes, the cricketer turned journalist, is to conduct interviews during play. "If, for instance, Mark Waugh scores a century, we will get him to show the camera his thigh pad," Hughes said. "On it he has written the details of all the centuries he has scored in the form of stick men."

Meanwhile, Peter Baxter, the producer of the BBC's *Test Match Special*, is upset that the fortieth anniversary of the programme is being marred by claims that John Arlott and Brian Johnston, its two most famous commentators, did not hit it off. "They would not have socialised a lot together, but I never saw a cross word between them," he said. "People who are suggesting otherwise are very sad."

FATHER TIMES

Rattling good way to begin the new season

MICHAEL HENDERSON



Line and Length

Neville Cardus thought that to be paid for watching cricket at Lord's in the afternoon, and then hearing Lottie Lehmann sing Richard Strauss at Covent Garden in the evening, was nothing less than an act of providence. If so, then he repaid his good fortune several times over, and his readers were all the richer for it.

Last Wednesday it was possible, almost, to follow in Cardus's footsteps. Less than an hour after play finished at the Oval, where Somerset had battled all day against Surrey, Sir Simon Rattle walked on to the stage of the Royal Festival Hall to conduct the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra in a programme by that well-balanced middle order, J Haydn, R Strauss and Berlioz (I capli).

It was the first day proper of the cricket season, and it may turn out to be the highlight of the summer. I do not, of course, refer to Richard Harden's batting, tenacious though it was, or to Alex Tudor's bowling, which was distinctly promising. But for one modest day and one glorious night I imagined myself to be a successor, in spirit, to Cardus. Young Rattle played shots all round the field.

He is not in fact a cricket man though his father, Denis, who passed away last year, assuredly was. But a wealth of associations link cricket with music, from Cardus himself, who changed common perceptions on both sides of the wicket, so to speak, through to a man such as Bob Willis, fast bowler supreme and fully paid-up Wagnerian.

Sir John Barbirolli was a lover of the game, but no more than

Zubin Mehta is today. (There is even a whisper that Carlos Kleiber, possibly the greatest living conductor, is a follower). Nigel Kennedy is a Warwickshire member; Julian Bream and Sir Neville Marriner run their own teams, Bream so seriously that when an opposing team turned up without wicketkeeping gloves he refused to lend them his own. Keith Miller could talk on (almost) equal terms about Beethoven to Cardus and, it is said, recruited a bomber mission home during the Second World War so that he could fly over Bonn, where the composer was born.

The tenor, Robert Tear, who has sung in all the world's leading opera houses, regards the youthful hours he spent batting at the other end to Tony Lewis to have been as pleasurable as any he has spent. Lewis was himself a fine violinist, and remains an utterly reliable musical witness.

It is not difficult to make a case for the mutual fascination. Both disciplines are by turns dramatic and tedious, depending on who is at the crease. There are conductors who can make Mahler sound as boring as a Boycott innings, and there are batsmen who can light up the day like

Haydn (who is always a test of

true musical intelligence). There are *longueurs* in both games, time for contemplation and scope for revelation. In short, cricket and music offer natural conduits for the human character to express itself.

But back to Rattle. In November 1987 he was making his debut with the Berlin Philharmonic in Mahler's Symphony No 6, which represented a bumping pitch and a blinding light if ever there was one. (There is another view of Mahler. Doug Ibbotson once wrote of a wretched day at Lord's that "if Mahler had ever completed his Symphony No 10 he would have called it the Middlesex"). Naughty!

At the final rehearsal, I started chatting to a man behind me who kept saying, "they really are playing for him!" It turned out to be Rattle Sr and when he discovered he was talking to a cricket writer he exclaimed: "Aha, a new Cardus!"

After the concert, that night he took me to one side in the green room and said: "Let me tell you about the time I played for my school against Kent, and was bowled by 'Tich Freeman'."

So it was in the holy of all musical hollies, Herbert von Karajan's room at the Berlin Philharmonic, with people reeling in shock after a superlative performance, that I heard how A.P. "Tich" Freeman, Kent's demon leg spinner, the taker of 3,776 wickets, more than any man in the history of the game save one (Wilfred Rhodes), had bowled out a schoolboy batsman nearly 60 years before.

"Les Ames, the wicketkeeper, was sitting next to me at lunch," said Denis. "and he told me 'when Tich comes on he'll bowl you a top spinner'. And he did. 'Then', he said, 'he'll bowl a googly'. And he did. 'Then he'll give you a leg spinner'. And he did. And it bowled me. Now, come and say hello to Simon. Good, wasn't it? They really can play. But the trombones aren't a patch on Birmingham."

Somewhere at home is the programme from that memorable evening, on which his son, that most gifted of men, has written "caught in the slips again" and "la for coming, Simon."

No, no: thank you.

Middlesex are kept waiting by Kallis

BY ALAN LEE

SEVEN counties began their Benson and Hedges Cup programme this week without an overseas player and anything up to eight teams could be without one when ten further matches are staged today. As only Surrey have been brave enough to dispense with foreign aid, this is a fair indication of the shambles that the system has become.

Middlesex, needing to beat Essex at Lord's to avoid the earliest of exits after their defeat in Dublin, would dearly like to reinforce their ranks with Jacques Kallis. The option is denied them, however, as Kallis has yet to arrive from South Africa, where he has been completing an extended season with Western Province.

Joe Hardstaff, the Middlesex secretary, returned from the indignities against Ireland to report: "Kallis will fly in early on Thursday morning and, if he has come through the journey well, he'll play at Cardiff on Friday." As Richard Johnson has been in poor form pre-season, Middlesex have little room for manoeuvre today against an Essex team in impressive form.

Yorkshire left out Darren Lehmann, their new Australian, at Old Trafford because he was short of match prac-

tice. They may give him his debut against Worcestershire at Headingley today.

Most of the remaining absentees are Pakistanis returning late, or unfit, from a hectic winter of international engagements. Wasim Akram is already back with Lancashire, though, and he could be drafted into their side against Derbyshire.

Neil Johnson, a Natal all-rounder scarcely known in England, is expected to play for Leicestershire at Grace Road, Nottinghamshire, the visitors, are among four counties still awaiting their registered Pakistanis.

Durham have already taken up where they left off last season, emphatically losing their first two one-day games. Victory over Northamptonshire, in their first home game of the season, would do much for local credibility.

Surrey have shed some of that commodity in the opening week, plunging abysmally in the championship and scrambling one win from two last-ball thrillers in the limited-overs games. This is not the start most predicted for them and they will be in chastened mood for the away game with Gloucestershire, who have begun surprisingly well.



"Where can I sell my beautiful home?"

See p.46

**Matthew
Bond**


An unspecified number of weeks later, Bonnie and her fling were tip-toeing round the dread word "commitment" and Jean-Yves was looking rather mournful about not having shown a little more of it to David. The conclusion? Life is thankfully a lot more complicated than the makers of trite documentaries would have you believe.

But nothing like as complicated as it's getting for Gary Sparrow (Nicholas Lyndhurst) in *Goodnight Sweetheart* (BBC): "Tomorrow I'll have two wives, 54 years apart and, in a few months time, a kid old enough to be my father." Helped by the seamless recasting of Elizabeth Carling and Emma Amos in the female leads and the ever-reliable Victor McGuire, the series is showing surprisingly little sign of running out of steam. Last night, it even nuthched up a television first — a rude and very funny joke about reflexivity. And no, you can't do it to yourself.

CHANNEL 5

CHANNEL 5 ON SATELLITE
Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder N 53 on the Astra Satellite. Viewers with a Videocrypt decoder will be able to receive the channel free of charge. Frequencies for transponder N 53 are pictures: 10.52075 GHz; sound: 10.7702 and 7.20 MHz.

07.00am 5 News Early (7280092)
3.00 Heraldozoo (2300450) 8.00 Adventure of the Bush Patrol (2535473)
3.00 Wildlife World Examining the 15th cent Venetian church the Santa del Miracolo fine example of early Renaissance church architecture (2327450)
00.00 Espresso (5927301) 10.00 Exclusive (5235450) 10.30 Fame and Fortune Lennox Lewis (f) (2947214)
00.00 Loeza Chat show (5174496) 11.00 Double Espresso (45731943)
00.00 The Bold and the Beautiful (2935856) 12.30pm Family Affairs (f) (f) (8812288)
00.00 5 News Update (92642818)
05.00 Sunset Beach (f) (5637092) 2.00 Company (5126437)
00.00 Indiscreet (1888) A romantic drama w Robert Wagner and Lesley-Anne Dor about the clandestine love affair between an actress and a diplomat (4815721)
00.00 5's Company: Little Eden (14702127) (1684585)
00.00 100 Per Cent Game show without a host (1684585)
00.00 Whittle Audience participation quiz (1981498)
00.00 Family Affairs Holy wakes up and shocked to find an unexpected bedm (f) (1685450)
00.00 Exclusive Showbiz news (1782634)
00.00 Wild Stakes The musk or returns Alaska (f) (1861634)
00.00 The Great Garden Game from grounds of Blenheim Palace where contestants are set a two-part challenge on the theme of topology (f) (1791382)
00.00 5 News (1787189)
00.00 Spies, Lies and Naked Truths (1981) presented by Andy Anderson, Ed Begley Jr and Linda Purl. A comedy thriller about a man's efforts to prevent the assassination of the President. Directed by Jan Frawley (1988721)



Jack Docherty (11.00pm)
00.00 The Jack Docherty Show Comedy chat (4793473)
00.00 Tids and Fids Inevitable medical or presented by Tony Slattery with doc Phil Hammond, Tony Gardner and Hil Jones. The guests are Rowland Riv and Gayle Tayside (2088556)
00.10am Live and Dangerous Sports magazine featuring US major league baseball (50726523)
00.40 Prisoner: Cell Block H (4537517) 3.00 30-30-6.00 100 Per Cent (f) (2878401)

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EQUESTRIANISM 53

Whitakers lead the charge for World Cup honours

SPORT

WEDNESDAY APRIL 30 1997

RUGBY UNION 54

Kick-start sets Lions on road to South Africa



Shearingham set for England return

Shearer revels in match with perfect partner

By OLIVER HOLT, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

THE patriotic drum will be beating again, the capacity crowd will be in rude voice and selective memories will be standing by, ready to banish the lingering disappointment of the 1-0 defeat by Italy in February to their darkest recesses. England's World Cup group two qualifying match against Georgia at Wembley tonight is as much about recapturing a mood as securing three more points to take them towards the finals in France next year.

This match that seemed as though it might be inconsequential once, sandwiched as it is in the middle of the England campaign, has become a seminal tie now, an encounter that, together with the game against Poland in Katowice next month, will decide whether England can indeed recover their poise and go on to Rome in October with the big prize left to play for.

It is about regaining the momentum built up so painstakingly in the prelude to the European championship last year and then allowed to run wild during the tournament. It is about trying to restore that invaluable feeling of confidence that lulled so many supporters into believing that England were favourites to beat the Italians that night at Wembley, even though key players were missing.

The defeat against Italy that suddenly cast into doubt the ability to qualify for the World Cup punctured much of the euphoria left over from Euro '96 and the empty victory over Mexico in the international match last month did little to inflate it again. A victory tonight, though, in a bona fide competitive tie, would bring the "feel-good" factor flooding back.

In some respects, of course, after the loss to an Italian team rejuvenated by the steward-

ship of Cesare Maldini, the rest of the England qualifying campaign seems doomed to be an exercise in damage-limitation, a scramble for second place in the group and qualification via a play-off. But if the mood in the England camp at Bisham Abbey this week has fallen short of a brooding desire for vengeance, it has been characterised by a quiet determination to atone for the poor performance against Italy with a convincing win over Georgia.

"I have always said that I can see us qualifying for the finals outright," Glenn Hoddle, the England coach,

GROUP TWO

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	5	4	1	0	8	1	13
England	4	3	0	1	7	2	9
Poland	3	1	1	1	3	4	4
Georgia	2	0	2	0	0	3	0
Moldova	4	0	0	4	2	11	0

RESULTS: Moldova 0 England 3; Moldova 1 Italy 3; England 2 Poland 1; Italy 1 Georgia 0; Georgia 1 England 2; Poland 2 Moldova 1; England 0 Italy 0.

MATCHES TO COME: Today, England v Georgia; Italy v Poland; May 31: Poland v England; June 7: Georgia v Moldova; June 14: Poland v Georgia; Sept 10: England v Moldova; Georgia v Italy; Sept 24: Moldova v Georgia; Oct 7: Moldova v Poland; Oct 11: Italy v England; Georgia v Poland.

said yesterday. "I feel we have got the players. Everyone seems to have cast us aside after that one result against Italy. Well, as far as I'm concerned we start again on Wednesday, we win the match and we go from there."

In his quest for the spirit of last summer, Hoddle will at last be able to draw not only on the return of David Seaman, absent against Italy, but also on the attacking partnership that was, in many ways, the greatest success of England's drive towards the semi-finals of Euro '96, the pairing of Alan Shearer and Teddy Sheringham.

In each of Hoddle's five games in charge so far, one or the other has been injured, but even though Sheringham has been suffering from an infected toe this week, both are fit and expected to spearhead the attack against a Georgia defence that conceded only one goal in their defeat in Italy last October.

The resurrection of their partnership has prompted comparisons with the pairing of Gary Lineker and Peter Beardsley that was so successful for a previous England side. "Shearer and Sheringham had a great summer together," Hoddle said. "They played extremely well in a couple of games. If you have got two strikers who are similar, that causes problems but these two have got a nice balance. Teddy is somebody who thinks about the game as it is developing."

Shearer, confirmed as the England captain yesterday, was so studiously non-controversial during his press conference that he refused to acknowledge that Sheringham was his favourite striking partner. He enjoyed playing football, he said, it did not matter who was in attack with him.

"People have always said that Teddy is not quick enough," Shearer said. "But for me, he has got two yards in his head. He is very clever and we link up very well and I think there is scope for our partnership to improve from what it was in Euro '96. But it would be wrong just to mention him."

Finally, Shearer even injected a little humour into his observations. "In some ways, I think Teddy and I are similar," he said. "But I think he is a lot more likely to pass to me than I am to him. If I had the ball, he was in a better position and I had no chance to score. I would still shoot."

ENGLAND (probable): D. Seaman (Arsenal); G. Neville (Manchester United); A. Adams (Aston Villa); S. Campbell (Tottenham Hotspur); D. Beckham (Manchester United); P. Jones (Aston Villa); D. Batty (Newcastle United); S. McManis (Liverpool); G. Leake (Blackburn Rovers); E. Shearer (Tottenham Hotspur); A. Shearer (Newcastle United).



Cronje, right, helps to open a bottle of champagne in Clontarf to start the celebration of Ireland's first victory over a county side

Ireland take the bull by the horns

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN DUBLIN

DUBLIN: Ireland (2pts) beat Middlesex by 46 runs

AN ENGLISH translation of Clontarf is "meadow of the bull" and yesterday, in this north Dublin suburb, Middlesex were the victims of the season's first unlikely bovine charge. Ireland took the four wickets that remained overnight within an hour in this Benson and Hedges Cup match to record their first victory over a county side.

Rejoice with them, Middlesex, to their immense credit, did, lining up to greet their victors as they left the field. Ireland played good cricket in this match and Mike Gatting, the Middlesex captain, would take nothing away from their performance. This was a marvellous day for the undervalued and it was much savoured by the hardy band of Irish cricket-lovers who had gathered to witness the moment of triumph.

Afterwards, as radio and television crews conducted six

interviews with various players and officials on the outfield, in front of the pleasant club house, people reflected with good cheer on this day of days. Decker Curry's nomination for the gold award, ahead of Hansie Cronje, proved a popular choice, and there was brave talk of beating Essex when they go to Downpatrick in two weeks' time.

Curry, the opening batsman, alas, will not be at Taunton on Friday because of

work commitments, but his brilliant 75 set the tone of their innings on Monday and he is hoping to play against Glamorgan in Cardiff next Monday. If he makes it, go and watch him. Get there early. He may dazzle, or perish quickly.

Justin Benson, the Ireland captain and once of Leicestershire, basked in the glow of victory, but remained unhappy about the way that Ireland lost the recent ICC Trophy

play-off to Scotland in Kuala Lumpur. "People said we choked," he said, "but it wasn't that. We were complacent that day, and let down Mike Hendrick [the team coach]; but we were sharp in this match."

Middlesex began the day needing to make 148 in 17.4 overs and, after Jamie Hewitt swung Benson to Angus Dunlop at deep mid-wicket, they were 103 short with ten overs to go. It was then that Peter Gillespie, running in 30 yards from long on, took a superb diving catch to dismiss Keith Brown. To reach the ball was a fair effort and to keep his footing on the wet outfield as he tumbled over made it a magnificent catch.

For a while, Fraser and Tufnell frolicked and, with two wickets in hand, a target of 59 from five overs was just about possible. Fraser, relishing his role with the bat, struck two sixes. Cronje returned to bowl Tufnell, his third wicket to set beside his unbeaten 94, and the game was up when Cook, having driven Hewitt for six, missed

the next ball but one. Fraser was unbeaten with 30.

Gatting and Cronje agreed that Curry's early blast gave Ireland an edge that they retained. "They have obviously done their homework on the 50-over game," Gatting said. "They got off to a good start and, when you stick somebody like Cronje in the middle of it, and he bats as he did, you're up against a pretty good team."

Benson and Hendrick were

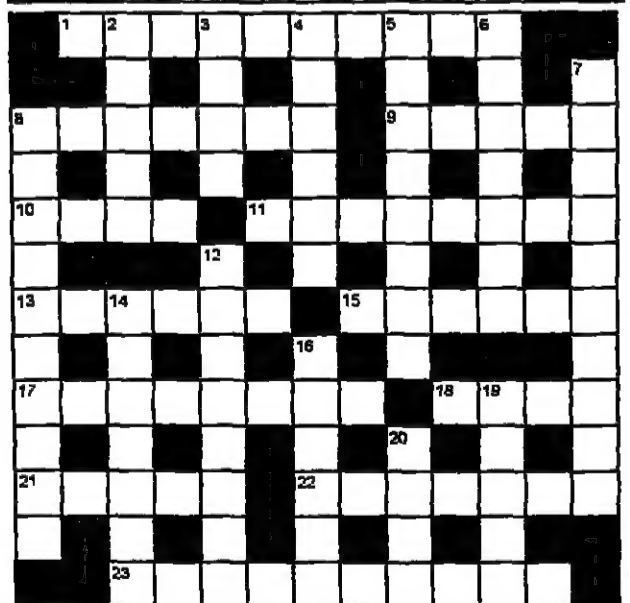
Yorkshire triumph 52
Bett off 52
Boon's burden 53

busy men later, as the world and his wife wanted a piece of them. A spectator revealed how, when he heard a report on the BBC World Service the previous night, mentioning how Middlesex were up a gum tree in Dublin, he nearly leapt out of bed in shock. That's the measure of what Ireland's cricketers achieved yesterday, and it was grand to see their pleasure at a job well done.

DUBLIN SCOREBOARD

IRELAND		MIDDLESEX	
J.D. Curry b Wicket	75	M.R. Ramprakash b Wicket	34
W.K. McCullum c Brown b Fraser	17	M.W. Gatting c and b Benson	23
D.A. Lewis b Tufnell	35	J.C. Pooley b Benson	11
W.J. Cronje not out	94	K.R. Brown c Gillespie b Molins	27
J.D.R. Benson b Hewitt	20	N.P. Dutch c Patterson b Molins	1
Y.A. Patterson not out	24	J.P. Hewitt c Curry b Benson	1
Extras (lb 10, w 3, nb 4)	17	A.R.C. Fraser not out	30
Total (4 wickets, 80 overs)	281	P.C.R. Tufnell b Cronje	10
A.R. Dunlop, D. Hewlett, P.G. Gillespie, G.L. Molins and P. McCrum did not bat.		S.J. Cook b Hewitt	6
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-72, 2-117, 3-165, 4-254		Extras (lb 3, lb 14, w 15)	32
BOWLING: Fraser 10-3-34-1; Cook 9-0-71-0; Hewitt 10-0-53-1; Wicket 10-0-47-1; Tufnell 6-0-37-1; Dutch 5-0-29-0		Total (46.4 overs)	236
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-45, 2-69, 3-104, 4-128, 5-133, 6-134, 7-175, 8-180, 9-227		FALL OF WICKETS: 1-45, 2-69, 3-104, 4-128, 5-133, 6-134, 7-175, 8-180, 9-227	
BOWLING: Fraser 10-3-34-1; Cook 9-0-71-0; Hewitt 10-0-53-1; Wicket 10-0-47-1; Tufnell 6-0-37-1; Dutch 5-0-29-0		BOWLING: Gillespie 9-0-40-0; McCrum 6-0-21-0; Hewitt 5-0-30-2; Cronje 8-0-38-3; Molins 10-0-44-2; Benson 9-0-46-3	
MIDDLESEX		Gold award: J.D. Curry	
P.N. Wicket c Gillespie b Hewitt 24		Umpires: J.W. Holder and A.A. Jones	
P.E. Wellings b Wicket	23		

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1081

- ACROSS
- Back matter in book (10)
 - One-eighth of a mile (7)
 - John Philip — the March King (5)
 - Vegetable sounds like liquid escape (4)
 - Residential outskirts (8)
 - Very hot (6)
 - Very nasty (6)
 - Ancient regime Paris prison (8)
 - A defect (4)
 - Greek rh (5)
 - Without guile, embellishment (7)
 - On which gymnasts bounce (10)
- DOWN
- Contract; moneybag (5)
 - Love; his London statue (4)
 - Canoe manager's bench (footbal) (6)
 - Dorothy's boring husband (Middlemarch) (8)
 - Sleep (7)
 - By a long distance (3,3,4)
 - Crumble away (4,2,4)
 - World's highest lake (S.Am.) (8)
 - Consideration; admiration (7)
 - Lavish (meal) (4-2)
 - First Soviet leader (5)
 - Dance; sphere (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1080
ACROSS: 1 Robe 3 Step down 8 Sizable 10 Tweak 11 Helen of Troy 13 Uproot 15 Bridal 17 Take-home pay 20 Adieu 21 Risotto 22 Grannies 23 Hymn
DOWN: 1 Rush hour 2 Bezel 4 Tee off 5 Peter Grimes 6 One-eyed 7 Nuke 9 Bannockburn 12 Play down 14 Retina 16 Charge 18 Petty 19 Fang

SOLUTION TO TIMES TWO CROSSWORD 1076
In association with BRITISH MIDLAND
ACROSS: 1 Graphite 5 Siam 8 Absurdly 9 Amos 11 Topsy 12 Overrun 13 Dim sum 15 Public 18 Insular 19 Apron 21 Crux 22 Inedible 23 Slew 24 Reported
DOWN: 1 Grammed 2 Aesop 3 Hurly-burly 4 Tallow 6 Immoral 7 Mason 10 Get-up-and-go 14 Misrule 16 Contend 17 Brontë 18 Incus 20 Robot
1st PRIZE of a return ticket travelling economy class to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLAND's domestic or international network is C Barnes, Belfast.
2nd PRIZE of a return ticket to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLAND's domestic network is D Honey, Halesowen.
All flights subject to availability.

Model professionals toy with the relegation issue

For Stuart Pearce, hero and villain of penalty shoot-outs with England and talismanic leader of Nottingham Forest, the game is almost up. One of the most instantly recognisable figures in English football looks doomed to spend next season shut in a cardboard box and locked in a stockroom in High Wycombe.

He will not want for company, reminders of the harsh reality of relegation from the FA Carling Premiership will be all around. His Forest team-mates will be there for a start and the surrounding shelves may be filled by superstars such as Juninho, Adriano Ravanelli, or perhaps even Julian Dicks, a defender in the Pearce mould.

Among the many pitfalls of the loss of a cherished place in the Premiership is that whole teams become persona non grata to Corinthian, the Buckinghamshire firm that makes seven centimetre figurines of players from leading clubs.

Surprise relegation candidates such as Forest and Middlesbrough can cost the company thousands of pounds in lost revenue. The result is that Corinthian fret

Andrew Jones on the heavy price to be paid for being taken out of the shop window

over the changing fortunes at the foot of the Premiership almost as much as supporters of the clubs that are involved.

Gary Booker, marketing director of the company, said: "We do not currently have a licence with the Nationwide League, and stores are reluctant to keep players from relegated clubs on their shelves. Once a club leaves the Premiership the focus is off them and this does have an effect on stock-holding."

More than 10 million of the £2.25 figures have been sold since their launch in September 1995, and they were the third top-selling toy in the UK last Christmas, behind Action Man and Barbie.

But choosing which players to feature can be an expensive gamble at £1,000 per man for development and production costs. Six months is the minimum time it takes from the decision to produce a model to

it appearing in shops, time for careers and reputations to plummet.

"We obviously expected Nottingham Forest and Middlesbrough to do better than they have," Booker said. "Our boxed team set of Forest only reached the stores in October 1996."

It wasn't the only disappointment caused by Forest — an original model and mould of Frank Clark had been approved for Corinthian's range of Premiership managers, but his resignation came a few days before the models were to go into production. Corinthian could do nothing about 5,000 Kevin Keegan figures. The models were expected to be one of the company's top sellers, but a matter of hours after a shipment of finished Keegans had left the factory in China for the UK, the real Keegan resigned as manager of Newcastle United. Booker said: "It's just one of those things we have learned to live with in our business."

The first season in the Premiership for promoted clubs can have many pitfalls for the company and, with the recent record of many new arrivals, no figures were produced for Sunderland, Derby County or Leicester City this season.

Sadly, for Barnsley fans, the club's first season in the top division may not be marked with a figure of even one of their players, but Bolton's quick return to the Premiership is good news for Corinthian. After a year, quite literally, in the shadows, Bolton players will soon be where any footballer aims to be — back in the shop window.

Lewis gets go ahead to take on Akinwande

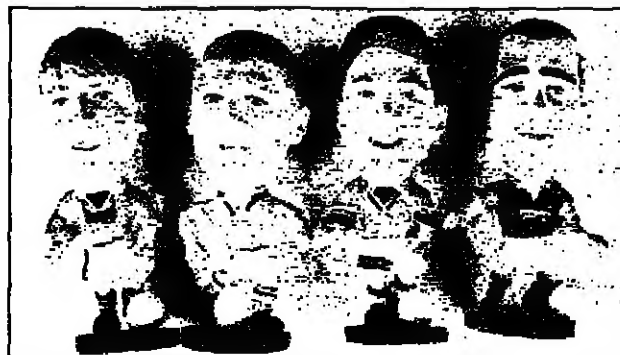
By SRIKUMAR SEN BOXING CORRESPONDENT

LENNOX LEWIS will defend his World Boxing Council heavyweight championship against Henry Akinwande at Atlantic City, New Jersey, on July 10. The bout will be staged by Lewis's promoter, Panix, together with its American associate, Main Events.

Panos Eliades, the head of Panix, concluded the deal yesterday after signing agreements with Don King, the American promoter, HBO, the American cable television company, and Sky Television, which will show the bout at 11.59pm.

Eliades said that Lewis was delighted that his company had secured the bout and was happy to get on with the contest, to get it out of the way and prepare for his next contest, which he hopes will be against Evander Holyfield.

Lewis is confident that Holyfield will beat Tyson again when they meet on June 28. Lewis is already training in Miami and will move next week to the Pocono mountains in Pennsylvania. Eliades added that he had been in talks with King for a month. King wanted to come to an arrangement as he did not want to go to pursue offers for fear of having to bid more to secure it. He offered Lewis \$6 million (about £3.7 million) to sign a deal, but Panix offered to buy the promotion by making King a counter-offer, which is believed to be in the region of \$3 million to stage the show and the American promoter readily agreed.



Pearce, Ravanelli, Juninho and Dicks await their fate

Not your rank and file pint.

BOMBARDIER

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